Serfojee Rajah. 1830

ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN;

OR,

1271

THE MAIDEN OF THE MIST.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF "WAVERLEY," &c.

What! will the aspiring blood of Lancaster
Sink in the ground?

SHAKSPEARE.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. *

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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A24·3.
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ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN;

OR,

THE MAIDEN OF THE MIST.

CHAPTER I.

———— I was, I must confess,
Fair Albion's Queen in former golden days;
But now mischance hath trode my title down,
And with dishonour laid me in the dust,
Where I must take like seat unto my fortune,
And to my humble seat conform myself.
Henry IV. Part III.

THE hostelrie of the Flying Stag, in Strasburg, was, like every inn in the empire at the period, conducted much with the same discourteous inattention to the wants and accommodation of the guests, as that of John Mengs. But the youth and good looks of Arthur Philipson, circumstances which seldom or never fail

to produce some effect where the fair are concerned, prevailed upon a short, plump, dimpled, blue-eyed, fair-skinned yungfrau, the daughter of the landlord of the Flying Stag, (himself a fat old man, pinned to the oaken-chair in the *stubé*,) to carry herself to the young Englishman with a degree of condescension, which, in the privileged race to which she belonged, was little short of degradation. She not only put her light buskins and her pretty ancles in danger of being soiled by tripping across the yard to point out an unoccupied stable, but, on Arthur's enquiry after his father, condescended to recollect, that such a guest as he described had lodged in the house last night, and had said he expected to meet there a young person, his fellow-traveller.

"I will send him out to you, fair sir," said the little yungfrau with a smile, which, if things of the kind are to be valued by their rare occurrence, must have been reckoned inestimable.

She was as good as her word. In a few instants the elder Philipson entered the stable, and folded his son in his arms.

"My son—my dear son!" said the English-

man, his usual stoicism broken down and melted by natural feeling and parental tenderness,—"Welcome to me at all times—welcome, in a period of doubt and danger—and most welcome of all, in a moment which forms the very crisis of our fate. In a few hours I shall know what we may expect from the Duke of Burgundy.—Hast thou the token?"

Arthur's hand first sought that which was nearest to his heart, both in the literal and allegorical sense, the small parcel, namely, which Anne had given him at parting. But he recollected himself in the instant, and presented to his father the packet, which had been so strangely lost and recovered at La Ferette.

"It hath run its own risk since you saw it," he observed to his father, "and so have I mine. I received hospitality at a castle last night, and behold a body of *lanz-knechts* in the neighbourhood began in the morning to mutiny for their pay. The inhabitants fled from the castle to escape their violence, and, as we passed their leaguer in the grey of the morning, a drunken Baaren-hauter shot my poor horse, and I was

forced, in the way of exchange, to take up with his heavy Flemish animal, with its steel-saddle, and its clumsy chaffron."

"Our road is beset with perils," said his father. "I too have had my share, having been in great danger (he told not its precise nature) at an inn, where I rested last night. But I left it in the morning, and proceeded hither in safety. I have at length, however, obtained a safe escort to conduct me to the Duke's camp near Dijon; and I trust to have an audience of him this evening. Then if our last hope should fail, we will seek the sea-port of Marseilles, hoist sail for Candia or for Rhodes, and spend our lives in defence of Christendom, since we may no longer fight for England."

Arthur heard these ominous words without reply; but they did not the less sink upon his heart, deadly as the doom of the judge which secludes the criminal from society and all its joys, and condemns him to an eternal prison-house. The bells from the cathedral began to toll at this instant, and reminded the elder Philipson of the duty of hearing mass, which was said at all

hours in some one or other of the separate chapels which are contained in that magnificent pile. His son followed, on an intimation of his pleasure.

In approaching the access to this superb cathedral, the travellers found it obstructed, as is usual in Catholic countries, by the number of mendicants of both sexes, who crowded round the entrance to give the worshippers an opportunity of discharging the duty of alms-giving, so positively enjoined as a chief observance of their church. The Englishmen extricated themselves from their importunity by bestowing, as is usual on such occasions, a donative of small coin upon those who appeared most needy, or most deserving of their charity. One tall woman stood on the steps close to the door, and extended her hand to the elder Philipson, who, struck with her appearance, exchanged for a piece of silver the copper coins which he had been distributing amongst others.

"A marvel!" she said, in the English language, but in a tone calculated only to be heard by him alone, although his son also caught the

sound and sense of what she said,—"Ay, a miracle!—An Englishman still possesses a silver piece, and can afford to bestow it on the poor!"

Arthur was sensible that his father started somewhat at the voice or words, which bore, even in his ear, something of deeper import than the observation of an ordinary mendicant. But after a glance at the female who thus addressed him, his father passed onwards into the body of the church, and was soon engaged in attending to the solemn ceremony of the mass, as it was performed by a priest at the altar of a chapel divided from the main body of the splendid edifice, and dedicated, as it appeared from the image over the altar, to Saint George; that military Saint, whose real history is so obscure, though his popular legend rendered him an object of peculiar veneration during the feudal ages. The ceremony was begun and finished with all customary forms. The officiating priest, with his attendants, withdrew, and though some of the few worshippers who had assisted at the solemnity remained telling their beads, and occupied with the performance of their pri-

vate devotions, far the greater part left the chapel, to visit other shrines, or to return to the prosecution of their secular affairs.

But Arthur Philipson remarked, that whilst they dropped off one after another, the tall woman who had received his father's alms continued to kneel near the altar; and he was yet more surprised to see that his father himself, who, he had many reasons to know, was desirous to spend in the church no more time than the duties of devotion absolutely claimed, remained also on his knees, with his eyes resting on the form of the veiled devotee, (such she seemed from her dress,) as if his own motions were to be guided by hers. By no idea which occurred to him, was Arthur able to form the least conjecture as to his father's motives—he only knew that he was engaged in a critical and dangerous negotiation, liable to influence or interruption from various quarters; and that political suspicion was so generally awake both in France, Italy, and Flanders, that the most important agents were often obliged to assume the most impe-

netrable disguises, in order to insinuate themselves without suspicion into the countries where their services were required. Louis XI., in particular, whose singular policy seemed in some degree to give a character to the age in which he lived, was well known to have disguised his principal emissaries and envoys in the fictitious garbs of mendicant monks, minstrels, gipsies, and other privileged wanderers of the meanest description.

Arthur concluded, therefore, that it was not improbable that this female might, like themselves, be something more than her dress imported; and he resolved to observe his father's deportment towards her, and regulate his own actions accordingly. A bell at last announced that mass, upon a more splendid scale, was about to be celebrated before the high altar of the cathedral itself, and its sound withdrew from the sequestered chapel of St George the few who had remained at the shrine of the military saint, excepting the father and son, and the female penitent who kneeled opposite to them.

When the last of the worshippers had retired, the female arose and advanced towards the elder Philipson, who, folding his arms on his bosom, and stooping his head, in an attitude of obeisance which his son had never before seen him assume, appeared rather to wait what she had to say, than to propose addressing her.

There was a pause. Four lamps, lighted before the shrine of the saint, cast a dim radiance on his armour and steed, represented as he was in the act of transfixing with his lance the prostrate dragon, whose outstretched wings and writhing neck were in part touched by their beams. The rest of the chapel was dimly illuminated by the autumnal sun, which could scarce find its way through the stained panes of the small lanceolated window, which was its only aperture to the open air. The light fell doubtful and gloomy, tinged with the various hues through which it passed, upon the stately, yet somewhat broken and dejected form of the female, and on those of the melancholy and anxious father, and his son, who, with all the

eager interest of youth, suspected and anticipated extraordinary consequences from so singular an interview.

At length the female approached to the same side of the shrine with Arthur and his father, as if to be more distinctly heard, without being obliged to raise the slow solemn voice in which she had spoken.

" Do you here worship," she said, " the St George of Burgundy, or the St George of merry England, the flower of chivalry?"

" I serve," said Philipson, folding his hands humbly on his bosom, " the saint to whom this chapel is dedicated, and the Deity with whom I hope for his holy intercession, whether here or in my native country."

" Ay—you," said the female, " even you can forget—you, even you, who have been numbered among the mirror of knighthood—can forget that you have worshipped in the royal fane of Windsor—that you have there bent a *gartered* knee, where kings and princes kneeled around you—you can forget this, and make your ori-

sons at a foreign shrine, with a heart undisturbed with the thoughts of what you have been,—praying, like some poor peasant, for bread and life during the day that passes over you."

"Lady," replied Philipson, "in my proudest hours, I was, before the Being to whom I preferred my prayers, but as a worm in the dust—In His eyes I am now neither less nor more, degraded as I may be in the opinion of my fellow-reptiles."

"How canst thou think thus?" said the devotee; "and yet it is well with thee that thou canst. But what have thy losses been compared to mine!"

She put her hand to her brow, and seemed for a moment overpowered by agonizing recollections.

Arthur pressed to his father's side, and enquired, in a tone of interest which could not be repressed, "Father, who is this lady?—Is it my mother?"

"No, my son," answered Philipson; "peace, for the sake of all you hold dear or holy!"

The singular female, however, heard both the question and answer, though expressed in a whisper.

"Yes," she said, "young man—I am—I should say I was—your mother; the mother, the protectress, of all that was noble in England —I am Margaret of Anjou."

Arthur sank on his knees before the dauntless widow of Henry the Sixth, who so long, and in such desperate circumstances, upheld, by unyielding courage and deep policy, the sinking cause of her feeble husband; and who, if she occasionally abused victory by cruelty and revenge, had made some atonement by the indomitable resolution with which she had supported the fiercest storms of adversity. Arthur had been bred in devoted adherence to the now dethroned line of Lancaster, of which his father was one of the most distinguished supporters; and his earliest deeds of arms, which, though unfortunate, were neither obscure nor ignoble, had been done in their cause. With an enthusiasm belonging to his age and

education, he in the same instant flung his bonnet on the pavement, and knelt at the feet of his ill-fated sovereign.

Margaret threw back the veil which concealed those noble and majestic features, which even yet,—though rivers of tears had furrowed her cheek,—though care, disappointment, domestic grief, and humbled pride, had quenched the fire of her eye, and wasted the smooth dignity of her forehead,—even yet showed the remains of that beauty which once was held unequalled in Europe. The apathy with which a succession of misfortunes and disappointed hopes had chilled the feelings of the unfortunate Princess, was for a moment melted by the sight of the fair youth's enthusiasm. She abandoned one hand to him, which he covered with tears and kisses, and with the other stroked with maternal tenderness his curled locks, as she endeavoured to raise him from the posture he had assumed. His father, in the meanwhile, shut the door of the chapel, and placed his back against it, withdrawing himself thus from the group, as if for

the purpose of preventing any stranger from entering, during a scene so extraordinary.

"And thou, then," said Margaret, in a voice where female tenderness combated strangely with her natural pride of rank, and with the calm, stoical indifference induced by the intensity of her personal misfortunes; "thou, fair youth, art the last scion of the noble stem, so many fair boughs of which have fallen in our hapless cause. Alas, alas! what can I do for thee? Margaret has not even a blessing to bestow. So wayward is her fate, that her benedictions are curses, and she has but to look on you and wish you well, to ensure your speedy and utter ruin. I—I have been the fatal poison-tree, whose influence has blighted and destroyed all the fair plants that arose beside and around me, and brought death upon every one, yet am myself unable to find it!"

"Noble and royal mistress," said the elder Englishman, "let not your princely courage, which has borne such extremities, be dismayed, now that they are passed over, and that a chance

at least of happier times is approaching to you and to England."

"To England, to *me*, noble Oxford!" said the forlorn and widowed Queen,—"If to-morrow's sun could place me once more on the throne of England, could it give back to me what I have lost? I speak not of wealth or power—they are as nothing in the balance—I speak not of the hosts of noble friends who have fallen in defence of me and mine—Somersets, Percys, Staffords, Cliffords—they have found their place in fame, in the annals of their country—I speak not of my husband, he has exchanged the state of a suffering saint upon earth for that of a glorified saint in Heaven—But O, Oxford! my son—my Edward!—Is it possible for me to look on this youth, and not remember that thy countess and I on the same night gave birth to two fair boys? How oft we endeavoured to prophecy their future fortunes, and to persuade ourselves that the same constellation which shone on their birth, would influence their succeeding life, and hold a friendly and equal bias till they reached some destined goal of happiness and

honour! Alas, thy Arthur lives; but my Edward, born under the same auspices, fills a bloody grave!"

She wrapped her head in her mantle, as if to stifle the complaints and groans which maternal affection poured forth at these cruel recollections. Philipson, or the exiled Earl of Oxford as we may now term him, distinguished in these changeful times by the steadiness with which he had always maintained his loyalty to the line of Lancaster, saw the imprudence of indulging his sovereign in her weakness.

"Royal mistress," he said, "life's journey is that of a brief winter's day, and its course will run on, whether we avail ourselves of its progress or no. My sovereign is, I trust, too much mistress of herself to suffer lamentation for what is passed to deprive her of the power of using the present time. I am here in obedience to your command; I am to see Burgundy forthwith, and if I find him pliant to the purpose to which we would turn him, events may follow which will change into gladness our present mourning. But we must use our opportunity

with speed as well as zeal. Let me know then, madam, for what reason your Majesty hath come hither, disguised and in danger. Surely it was not merely to weep over this young man that the high-minded Queen Margaret left her father's court, disguised herself in mean attire, and came from a place of safety to one of doubt at least, if not of danger?"

"You mock me, Oxford," said the unfortunate Queen, "or you deceive yourself, if you think you still serve that Margaret whose word was never spoken without a reason, and whose slightest action was uninfluenced by a motive. Alas! I am no longer the same firm and rational being. The feverish character of grief, while it makes one place hateful to me, drives me to another in very impotence and impatience of spirit. My father's residence, thou sayst, is safe; but is it tolerable for such a soul as mine? Can one who has been deprived of the noblest and richest kingdom of Europe—one who has lost hosts of noble friends—one who is a widowed consort, a childless mother—one upon whose head Heaven hath poured forth its last vial of un-

mitigated wrath,—can she stoop to be the companion of a weak old man, who, in sonnets and in music, in mummery and folly, in harping and rhyming, finds a comfort for all that poverty has that is distressing; and what is still worse, for all that is ridiculous and contemptible?"

"Nay, with your leave, madam," said her counsellor, "blame not the good King René, because, persecuted by fortune, he has been able to find out for himself humbler sources of solace, which your prouder spirit is disposed to disdain. A contention among his minstrels, has for him the animation of a knightly combat; and a crown of flowers, twined by his troubadours, and graced by their sonnets, he accounts a valuable compensation for the diadems of Jerusalem, of Naples, and of both Sicilies, of which he only possesses the empty titles."

"Speak not to me of the pitiable old man," said Margaret; "sunk below even the hatred of his worst enemies, and never thought worthy of any thing more than contempt. I tell thee, noble Oxford, I have been driven nearly mad with my forced residence at Aix, in the

paltry circle which he calls his court. My ears, tuned as they now are only to sounds of affliction, are not so weary of the eternal tinkling of harps, and squeaking of rebecks, and snapping of castanets;—my eyes are not so tired of the beggarly affectation of court ceremonial, which is only respectable when it implies wealth and expresses power,—as my very soul is sick of the paltry ambition which can find pleasure in spangles, tassels, and trumpery, when the reality of all that is great and noble hath passed away. No, Oxford. If I am doomed to lose the last cast which fickle fortune seems to offer me, I will retreat into the meanest convent in the Pyrennean hills, and at least escape the insult of the ideot gaiety of my father.—Let him pass from our memory as from the page of history, in which his name will never be recorded. I have much of more importance both to hear and to tell.—And now, my Oxford, what news from Italy? Will the Duke of Milan afford us assistance with his counsels, or with his treasures?"

"With his counsels willingly, madam; but how you will relish them I know not, since he

recommends to us submission to our hapless fate, and resignation to the will of Providence."

"The wily Italian! Will not, then, Galeasso advance any part of his hoards, or assist a friend, to whom he hath in his time full often sworn faith?"

"Not even the diamonds which I offered to deposit in his hands," answered the Earl, "could make him unlock his treasury to supply us with ducats for our enterprise. Yet he said, if Charles of Burgundy should think seriously of an exertion in our favour, such was his regard for that great prince, and his deep sense of your Majesty's misfortunes, that he would consider what the state of his exchequer, though much exhausted, and the condition of his subjects, though impoverished by taxes and talliages, would permit him to advance in your behalf."

"The double-faced hypocrite!" said Margaret. "If the assistance of the princely Burgundy lends us a chance of regaining what is our own, then he will give us some paltry parcel of crowns, that our restored prosperity may forget his indiffer-

ence to our adversity.—But what of Burgundy? I have ventured hither to tell you what I have learned, and to hear report of your proceedings—a trusty watch provides for the secrecy of our interview. My impatience to see you brought me hither in this mean disguise. I have a small retinue at a convent a mile beyond the town—I have had your arrival watched by the faithful Lambert—and now I come to know your hopes or your fears, and to tell you my own."

"Royal lady," said the Earl, "I have not seen the Duke. You know his temper to be wilful, sudden, haughty, and unpersuadable. If he can adopt the calm and sustained policy which the times require, I little doubt his obtaining full amends of Louis, his sworn enemy, and even of Edward, his ambitious brother-in-law. But if he yields to extravagant fits of passion, with or without provocation, he may hurry into a quarrel with the poor but hardy Helvetians, and is likely to engage in a perilous contest, in which he cannot be expected to gain any thing, while he undergoes a chance of the most serious losses."

"Surely," replied the Queen, "he will not trust the usurper Edward, even in the very moment when he is giving the greatest proof of treachery to his alliance?"

"In what respect, madam?" replied Oxford. "The news you allude to has not reached me."

"How, my lord? Am I then the first to tell you, that Edward of York has crossed the sea with such an army, as scarce even the renowned Henry V., my father-in-law, ever transported from France to Italy!"

"So much I have indeed heard was expected," said Oxford; "and I anticipated the effect as fatal to our cause."

"Edward is arrived," said Margaret, "and the traitor and usurper hath sent defiance to Louis of France, and demanded of him the crown of that kingdom as his own right—that crown which was placed on the head of my unhappy husband, when he was yet a child in the cradle."

"It is then decided—the English are in France," answered Oxford, in a tone expressive

of the deepest anxiety.—" And whom brings Edward with him on this expedition?"

"All—all the bitterest enemies of our house and cause—The false, the traitorous, the dishonoured George, whom he calls Duke of Clarence—the blood-drinker, Richard—the licentious Hastings—Howard—Stanley—in a word, the leaders of all those traitors whom I would not name, unless by doing so my curses could sweep them from the face of the earth."

"And—I tremble to ask," said the Earl—"Does Burgundy prepare to join them as a brother of the war, and make common cause with this Yorkish host against King Louis of France?"

"By my advices," replied the Queen, "and they are both private and sure, besides that they are confirmed by the bruit of common fame—No, my good Oxford, no!"

"For that may the Saints be praised!" answered Oxford. "Edward of York—I will not malign even an enemy—is a bold and fearless leader—But he is neither Edward the Third, nor the heroic Black Prince—nor is he that

fifth Henry of Lancaster, under whom I won my spurs, and to whose lineage the thoughts of his glorious memory would have made me faithful, had my plighted vows of allegiance ever permitted me to entertain a thought of varying, or of defection. Let Edward engage in war with Louis without the aid of Burgundy, on which he has reckoned. Louis is indeed no hero, but he is a cautious and skilful general, more to be dreaded, perhaps, in these politic days, than if Charlemagne could again raise the Oriflamme, surrounded by Roland and all his paladins. Louis will not hazard such fields as those of Cressy, of Poictiers, or of Agincourt. With a thousand lances from Hainault, and twenty thousand crowns from Burgundy, Edward shall risk the loss of England, while he is engaged in a protracted struggle for the recovery of Normandy and Guienne. But what are the movements of Burgundy?"

"He has menaced Germany," said Margaret, "and his troops are now employed in over-running Lorraine, of which he has seized the principal towns and castles."

"Where is Ferrard de Vaudemont—a youth, it is said, of courage and enterprise, and claiming Lorraine in right of his mother, Yolande of Anjou, the sister of your Grace?"

"Fled," replied the Queen, "into Germany or Helvetia."

"Let Burgundy beware of him," said the experienced Earl; "for should the disinherited youth obtain confederates in Germany, and allies among the hardy Swiss, Charles of Burgundy may find him a far more formidable enemy than he expects. We are strong for the present, only in the Duke's strength, and if it is wasted in idle and desultory efforts, our hopes, alas! vanish with his power, even if he should be found to have the decided will to assist us. My friends in England are resolute not to stir without men and money from Burgundy."

"It is a fear," said Margaret, "but not our worst fear. I dread more the policy of Louis, who, unless my espials have grossly deceived me, has even already proposed a secret peace to Edward, offering with large sums of money to

purchase England to the Yorkists, and a truce of seven years."

"It cannot be," said Oxford. "No Englishman, commanding such an army as Edward must now lead, dares for very shame to retire from France without a manly attempt to recover his lost provinces."

"Such would have been the thoughts of a rightful prince," said Margaret, "who left behind him an obedient and faithful kingdom. Such may not be the thoughts of this Edward, misnamed Plantagenet, base perhaps in mind as in blood, since they say his real father was one Blackburn, an archer of Middleham—usurper, at least, if not bastard—such will not be his thoughts.* Every breeze that blows from England will bring with it apprehensions of defection amongst those over whom he has usurped authority. He will not sleep in peace till he returns to England with those cut-throats, whom he relies upon for the defence of his stolen

* The Lancastrian party threw the imputation of bastardy which was totally unfounded) upon Edward IV.

crown. He will engage in no war with Louis, for Louis will not hesitate to soothe his pride by humiliation—to gorge his avarice and pamper his voluptuous prodigality by sums of gold—and I fear much we shall soon hear of the English army retiring from France with the idle boast, that they have displayed their banners once more, for a week or two, in the provinces which were formerly their own."

"It the more becomes us to be speedy in moving Burgundy to decision," replied Oxford; "and for that purpose I post to Dijon. Such an army as Edward's cannot be transported over the narrow seas in several weeks. The probability is, that they must winter in France, even if they should have truce with King Louis. With a thousand Hainault lances from the eastern part of Flanders, I can be soon in the North, where we have many friends, besides the assurance of help from Scotland. The faithful West will rise at a signal—a Clifford can be found, though the mountain mists have hid him from Richard's researches—the Welsh will assemble at the rallying word of Tudor—the Red Rose raises

its head once more—and so, God save King Henry!"

"Alas!" said the Queen—"But no husband—no friend of mine—the son but of my mother-in-law by a Welsh chieftain—cold, they say, and crafty—But be it so—let me only see Lancaster triumph, and obtain revenge upon York, and I will die contented."

"It is then your pleasure that I should make the proffers expressed by your Grace's former mandates, to induce Burgundy to stir himself in our cause? If he learns the proposal of a truce betwixt France and England, it will sting sharper than aught I can say."

"Promise all, however," said the Queen. "I know his inmost soul—it is set upon extending the dominions of his House in every direction. For this he has seized Guelders—for this he now over-runs and occupies Lorraine—for this he covets such poor remnants of Provence as my father still calls his own. With such augmented territories, he proposes to exchange his ducal diadem for an arched crown of independent sovereignty. Tell the Duke, Margaret can assist his

views—tell him, that my father René shall disown the opposition made to the Duke's seizure of Lorraine—He shall do more—he shall declare Charles his heir in Provence, with my ample consent—tell him, the old man shall cede his dominions to him upon the instant that his Hainaulters embark for England, some small pension deducted to maintain a concert of fiddlers, and a troop of morrice-dancers. These are René's only earthly wants. Mine are still fewer—Revenge upon York, and a speedy grave!—For the paltry gold which we may need, thou hast jewels to pledge—For the other conditions, security if required."

"For these, madam, I can pledge my knightly word, in addition to your royal faith; and if more is required, my son shall be a hostage with Burgundy."

"Oh, no—no!" exclaimed the dethroned Queen, touched by perhaps the only tender feeling, which repeated and extraordinary misfortunes had not chilled into insensibility. "Hazard not the life of the noble youth—he that is the last of the loyal and faithful House

of Vere—he that should have been the brother in arms of my beloved Edward—he that had so nearly been his companion in a bloody and untimely grave! Do not involve this poor child in these fatal intrigues, which have been so baneful to his family. Let him go with me. Him at least I will shelter from danger whilst I live, and provide for when I am no more."

"Forgive me, madam," said Oxford, with the firmness which distinguished him. "My son, as you deign to recollect, is a De Vere, destined, perhaps, to be the last of his name. Fall he may, but it must not be without honour. To whatever dangers his duty and allegiance call him, be it from sword or lance, axe or gibbet, to these he must expose himself frankly, when his doing so can mark his allegiance. His ancestors have shown him how to brave them all."

"True, true," said the unfortunate Queen, raising her arms wildly,—"All must perish—all that have honoured Lancaster—all that have loved Margaret, or whom she has loved! The destruction must be universal—the young must

fall with the old—not a lamb of the scattered flock shall escape!"

"For God's sake, gracious madam," said Oxford, "compose yourself!—I hear them knock on the chapel door."

"It is the signal of parting," said the exiled Queen, collecting herself. "Do not fear, noble Oxford, I am not often thus; but how seldom do I see those friends, whose faces and voices can disturb the composure of my despair! Let me tie this relic about thy neck, good youth, and fear not its evil influence, though you receive it from an ill-omened hand. It was my husband's, blessed by many a prayer, and sanctified by many a holy tear; even my unhappy hands cannot pollute it. I should have bound it on my Edward's bosom on the dreadful morning of Tewkesbury fight; but he armed early—went to the field without seeing me—and all my purpose was vain."

She passed a golden chain round Arthur's neck as she spoke, which contained a small gold crucifix of rich but barbarous manufacture. It had belonged, said tradition, to Edward the

Confessor. The knock at the door of the chapel was repeated.

"We must not tarry," said Margaret; "let us part here—you for Dijon, I to Aix, my abode of unrest in Provence. Farewell—we may meet in a better hour—yet how can I hope it? Thus I said on the morning before the fight of Saint Albans—thus on the dark dawning of Towton—thus on the yet more bloody field of Tewkesbury—and what was the event? Yet hope is a plant which cannot be rooted out of a noble breast, till the last heartstring crack as it is pulled away."

So saying, she passed through the chapel door, and mingled in the miscellaneous assemblage of personages who worshipped or indulged their curiosity, or consumed their idle hours amongst the aisles of the cathedral.

Philipson and his son, both deeply impressed with the singular interview which had just taken place, returned to their inn, where they found a pursuivant, with the Duke of Burgundy's badge and livery, who informed them, that if they were the English merchants who were

carrying wares of value to the court of the Duke, he had orders to afford them the countenance of his escort and inviolable character. Under his protection they set out from Strasburg; but such was the uncertainty of the Duke of Burgundy's motions, and such the numerous obstacles which occurred to interrupt their journey, in a country disturbed by the constant passage of troops and preparation for war, that it was evening on the second day ere they reached the plain near Dijon, on which the whole, or great part of his power, lay encamped.

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S

CHAPTER II.

Thus said the Duke—thus did the Duke infer.
Richard III.

The eyes of the elder traveller were well accustomed to sights of martial splendour, yet even he was dazzled with the rich and glorious display of the Burgundian camp, in which, near the walls of Dijon, Charles, the wealthiest prince in Europe, had displayed his own extravagance, and encouraged his followers to similar profusion. The pavilions of the meanest officers were of silk and samite, while those of the nobility and great leaders glittered with cloth of silver, cloth of gold, variegated tapestry, and other precious materials, which in no other situation would have been employed as a cover from the wea-

ther, but would themselves have been thought worthy of the most careful protection. The horsemen and infantry who mounted guard, were arrayed in the richest and most gorgeous armour. A beautiful and very numerous train of artillery was drawn up near the entrance of the camp, and in its commander, Philipson, (to give the Earl the travelling name to which our readers are accustomed,) recognised Henry Colvin, an Englishman of inferior birth, but distinguished for his skill in conducting these terrible engines, which had of late come into general use in war. The banners and pennons which were displayed by every knight, baron, and man of rank, floated before their tents, and the owners of these transitory dwellings sat at the door half-armed, and enjoyed the military contests of the soldiers, in wrestling, pitching the bar, and other athletic exercises.

Long rows of the noblest horses were seen at picquet, prancing and tossing their heads, as impatient of the inactivity to which they were confined, or were heard neighing over the provender, which was spread plentifully before

them. The soldiers formed joyous groups around the minstrels and strolling jugglers, or were engaged in drinking parties at the sutlers' tents; others strolled about with folded arms, casting their eyes now and then to the sinking sun, as if desirous that the hour should arrive which should put an end to a day unoccupied, and therefore tedious.

At length the travellers reached, amidst the dazzling varieties of this military display, the pavilion of the Duke himself, before which floated heavily in the evening breeze, the broad and rich banner, in which glowed the armorial bearings and quarterings of a prince, Duke of six provinces, and Count of fifteen counties, who was, from his power, his disposition, and the success which seemed to attend his enterprises, the general dread of Europe. The pursuivant made himself known to some of the household, and the Englishmen were immediately received with courtesy, though not such as to draw attention upon them, and conveyed to a neighbouring tent, the residence of a general officer, which they were given to understand was

destined for their accommodation, and where their packages accordingly were deposited, and all refreshments offered them.

"As the camp is filled," said the domestic who waited upon them, "with soldiers of different nations and uncertain dispositions, the Duke of Burgundy, for the safety of your merchandise, has ordered you the protection of a regular sentinel. In the meantime, be in readiness to wait on his Highness, seeing you may look to be presently sent for."

Accordingly, the elder Philipson was shortly after summoned to the Duke's presence, introduced by a back entrance into the ducal pavilion, and into that part of it which, screened by close curtains and wooden barricades, formed Charles's own separate apartment. The plainness of the furniture, and the coarse apparatus of the Duke's toilette, formed a strong contrast to the appearance of the exterior of the pavilion; for Charles, whose character was, in that as in other things, far from consistent, exhibited in his own person during war an austerity, or rather coarseness of dress, and some-

times of manners also, which was more like the rudeness of a German lanzknecht, than the bearing of a prince of exalted rank; while, at the same time, he encouraged and enjoined a great splendour of expense and display amongst his vassals and courtiers, as if to be rudely attired, and to despise every restraint, even of ordinary ceremony, were a privilege of the sovereign alone. Yet when it pleased him to assume state in person and manners, none knew better than Charles of Burgundy how he ought to adorn and demean himself.

Upon his toilette appeared brushes and combs, which might have claimed dismissal as past the term of service, over-worn hats and doublets, dog-leashes, leather-belts, and other such paltry articles; amongst which lay at random, as it seemed, the great diamond called Sanci,—the three rubies termed the Three Brothers of Antwerp,—another great diamond called the Lamp of Flanders, and other precious stones of scarcely inferior value and rarity. This extraordinary display somewhat resembled the character of the Duke himself, who mixed cruelty with

justice, magnanimity with meanness of spirit, economy with extravagance, and liberality with avarice; being, in fact, consistent in nothing excepting in his obstinate determination to follow the opinion he had once formed, in every situation of things; and through all variety of risks.

In the midst of the valueless and inestimable articles of his wardrobe and toilette, the Duke of Burgundy called out to the English traveller, "Welcome, Herr Philipson—welcome, you of a nation whose traders are princes, and their merchants the mighty ones of the earth. What new commodities have you brought to gull us with? You merchants, by St George, are a wily generation."

"Faith, no new merchandise I, my lord," answered the elder Englishman; "I bring but the commodities which I showed your highness the last time I communicated with you, in the hope of a poor trader, that your Grace may find them more acceptable upon a review, than when you first saw them."

"It is well, Sir—Philipville, I think they call you?—you are a simple trader, or you take me

for a silly purchaser, that you think to gull me with the same wares which I fancied not formerly. Change of fashion, man—novelty—is the motto of commerce; your Lancaster wares have had their day, and I have bought of them like others, and was like enough to have paid dear for them too. York is all the vogue now."

"It may be so among the vulgar," said the Earl of Oxford; "but for souls like your highness, faith, honour, and loyalty, are jewels which change of fancy, or mutability of taste, cannot put out of fashion."

"Why, it may be, noble Oxford," said the Duke, "that I preserve in my secret mind some veneration for these old fashioned qualities, else why should I have such regard for your person, in which they have ever been distinguished? But my situation is painfully urgent, and should I make a false step at this crisis, I might break the purposes of my whole life. Observe me, Sir Merchant. Here has come over your old competitor, Blackburn, whom some call Edward of York and of London, with a commodity of bows and bills such as never

entered France since King Arthur's time; and he offers to enter into joint adventure with me, or, in plain speech, to make common cause with Burgundy, till we smoke out of his earths the old fox Louis, and nail his hide to the stable-door. In a word, England invites me to take part with him, against my most wily and inveterate enemy, the King of France; to rid myself of the chain of vassalage, and to ascend into the rank of independent princes;—how think you, noble Earl, can I forego this seducing temptation?"

"You must ask this of some of your counsellors of Burgundy," said Oxford; "it is a question fraught too deeply with ruin to my cause, for me to give a fair opinion on it."

"Nevertheless," said Charles, "I ask thee as an honourable man, what objections you see to the course proposed to me? Speak your mind, and speak it freely."

"My lord, I know it is in your highness's nature to entertain no doubts of the facility of executing any thing which you have once determined shall be done. Yet, though this prince-

like disposition may in some cases prepare for its own success, and has often done so, there are others, in which, persisting in our purpose, merely because we have once willed it, leads not to success, but to ruin. Look, therefore, at this English army;—winter is approaching, where are they to be lodged? how are they to be victualled? by whom are they to be paid? Is your highness to take all the expense and labour of fitting them for the summer campaign? for, rely on it, an English army never was, nor will be, fit for service, till they have been out of their own island long enough to accustom them to military duty. They are men, I grant, the fittest for soldiers in the world; but they are not soldiers as yet, and must be trained to become such at your highness's expense."

"Be it so," said Charles; "I think the Low Countries can find food for the beef-consuming knaves for a few weeks, and villages for them to lie in, and officers to train their sturdy limbs to war, and provost-marshals enough to reduce their refractory spirit to discipline."

"What happens next?" said Oxford. "You

march to Paris, add to Edward's usurped power another kingdom; restore to him all the possessions which England ever had in France, Normandy, Maine, Anjou, Gascony, and all besides—Can you trust this Edward when you shall have thus fostered his strength, and made him far stronger than this Louis whom you have united to pull down?"

"By St George, I will not dissemble with you! It is in that very point that my doubts trouble me. Edward is indeed my brother-in-law, but I am a man little inclined to put my head under my wife's girdle."

"And the times," said Philipson, "have too often shown the inefficiency of family alliances, to prevent the most gross breaches of faith."

"You say well, Earl. Clarence betrayed his father-in-law; Louis poisoned his brother—Domestic affections, pshaw! they sit warm enough by a private man's fire-side, but they cannot come into fields of battle, or princes' halls, where the wind blows cold. No, my alliance with Edward by marriage were little succour to me in time of need. I would as soon ride an unbroken

horse, with no better bridle than a lady's garter. But what then is the result? He wars on Louis; whichever gains the better, I, who must be strengthened in their mutual weakness, receive the advantage—The Englishmen slay the French with their cloth-yard shafts, and the Frenchmen, by skirmishes, waste, weaken, and destroy the English. With spring I take the field with an army superior to both, and then, St George for Burgundy!"

"And if, in the meanwhile, your Highness will deign to assist, even in the most trifling degree, a cause the most honourable that ever knight laid lance in rest for,—a moderate sum of money, and a small body of Hainault lances, who may gain both fame and fortune by the service, may replace the injured heir of Lancaster in the possession of his native and rightful dominion."

"Ay, marry, Sir Earl," said the Duke, "you come roundly to the point; but we have seen, and indeed partly assisted, at so many turns betwixt York and Lancaster, that we have some doubt which is the side to which Heaven has

given the right, and the inclinations of the people the effectual power; we are surprised into absolute giddiness by so many extraordinary revolutions of fortune as England has exhibited."

"A proof, my lord, that these mutations are not yet ended, and that your generous aid may give to the better side an effectual turn of advantage."

"And lend my cousin, Margaret of Anjou, my arm to dethrone my wife's brother? Perhaps he deserves small good-will at my hands, since he and his insolent nobles have been urging me with remonstrances, and even threats, to lay aside all my own important affairs, and join Edward, forsooth, in his knight-errant expedition against Louis. I will march against Louis at my own time, and not sooner; and, by St George! neither island king, nor island noble, shall dictate to Charles of Burgundy. You are fine conceited companions, you English of both sides, that think the matters of your own bedlam island are as interesting to all the world as to yourselves. But neither York nor Lancaster; neither brother Blackburn, nor cou-

sin Margaret of Anjou, not with John de Vere to back her, shall gull me. Men lure no hawks with empty hands."

Oxford, familiar with the Duke's disposition, suffered him to exhaust himself in chafing, that any one should pretend to dictate his course of conduct, and, when he was at length silent, replied with calmness—"Do I live to hear the noble Duke of Burgundy, the mirror of European chivalry, say, that no reason has been shown to him for an adventure where a helpless queen is to be redressed—a royal house raised from the dust? Is there not immortal *los* and honour—the trumpet of fame to proclaim the sovereign, who, alone in a degenerate age, has united the duties of a generous knight with those of a princely sovereign"——

The Duke interrupted him, striking him at the same time on the shoulder—"And King René's five hundred fiddlers to tune their cracked violins in my praise? and King René himself to listen to them, and say, 'Well fought Duke—well played fiddler!' I tell thee, John of Oxford, when thou and I wore maiden armour,

such words as fame, honour, *los*, knightly glory, lady's love, and so forth, were good mottoes for our snow-white shields, and a fair enough argument for splintering lances—Ay, and in tilt-yard, though somewhat old for these fierce follies, I would jeopard my person in such a quarrel yet, as becomes a knight of the order. But when we come to paying down of crowns, and embarking of large squadrons, we must have to propose to our subjects some substantial excuse for plunging them in war; some proposal for the public good—or, by St George! for our own private advantage, which is the same thing. This is the course the world runs, and, Oxford, to tell the plain truth, I mean to hold the same bias."

"Heaven forbid that I should expect your Highness to act otherwise than with a view to your subjects' welfare—the increase, that is, as your Grace happily expresses it, of your own power and dominion. The money we require is not in benevolence, but in loan; and Margaret is willing to deposit these jewels, of which I think your Grace knows the value, till she

shall repay the sum which your friendship may advance her in her necessity."

"Ha, ha!" said the Duke, "would our cousin make a pawn-broker of us, and have us deal with her like a Jewish usurer with his debtor?—Yet, in faith, Oxford, we may need the diamonds, for if this business were otherwise feasible, it is possible that I myself must become a borrower to aid my cousin's necessities. I have applied to the states of the Duchy, who are now sitting, and expect, as is reasonable, a large supply. But there are restless heads and close hands among them, and they may be niggardly—So place the jewels on the table in the meanwhile.—Well, say I am to be no sufferer in purse by this feat of knight-errantry which you propose to me, still princes enter not into war without some view of advantage?"

"Listen to me, noble sovereign. You are naturally bent to unite the great estates of your father, and those you have acquired by your own arms, into a compact and firm dukedom"——

"Call it a kingdom," said Charles; "it is the worthier word."

"Into a kingdom, of which the crown shall sit as fair and even on your Grace's brow as that of France on your present suzerain, Louis."

"It need not such shrewdness as yours to descry that such is my purpose," said the Duke; "else, wherefore am I here with helm on my head, and sword by my side? And wherefore are my troops seizing on the strong places in Lorraine, and chasing before them the beggarly De Vaudemont, who has the insolence to claim it as his inheritance? Yes, my friend, the aggrandizement of Burgundy is a theme for which the duke of that fair province is bound to fight, while he can put foot in stirrup."

"But think you not," said the English earl, "since you allow me to speak freely with your Grace, on the footing of old acquaintanceship, think you not that in this chart of your dominions, otherwise so fairly bounded, there is something on the southern frontier which might be arranged more advantageously for a King of Burgundy?"

"I cannot guess whither you would lead me," said the Duke, looking at a map of the Duchy and his other possessions, to which the

Englishman had pointed his attention, and then turning his broad keen eye upon the face of the banished Earl.

"I would say," replied the latter, "that, to so powerful a prince as your Grace, there is no safe neighbour but the sea. Here is Provence, which interferes betwixt you and the Mediterranean; Provence, with its princely harbours, and fertile corn-fields and vineyards. Were it not well to include it in your map of sovereignty, and thus touch the middle sea with one hand, while the other rested on the sea-coast of Flanders?"

"Provence, said you?"—replied the Duke, eagerly; "why, man, my very dreams are of Provence. I cannot smell an orange but it reminds me of its perfumed woods and bowers, its olives, citrons, and pomegranates. But how to frame pretensions to it? Shame it were to disturb René, the harmless old man, nor would it become a near relation. Then he is the uncle of Louis; and most probably, failing his daughter Margaret, or perhaps in preference to her, he hath named the French King his heir."

"A better claim might be raised up in your

Grace's own person," said the Earl of Oxford, "if you will afford Margaret of Anjou the succour she requires by me."

"Take the aid thou requirest," replied the Duke; "take double the amount of it in men and money! Let me but have a claim upon Provence, though thin as a single thread of thy Queen Margaret's hair, and let me alone for twisting it into the tough texture of a quadruple cable.—But I am a fool to listen to the dreams of one, who, ruined himself, can lose little by holding forth to others the most extravagant hopes."

Charles breathed high, and changed complexion as he spoke.

"I am not such a person, my Lord Duke," said the Earl. "Listen to me—René is broken with years, fond of repose, and too poor to maintain his rank with the necessary dignity; too good-natured, or too feeble-minded, to lay farther imposts on his subjects; weary of contending with bad fortune, and desirous to resign his territories"——

"His territories!" said Charles.

"Yes, all he actually possesses; and the

much more extensive dominions which he has claim to, but which have passed from his sway."

"You take away my breath!" said the Duke. "René resign Provence! and what says Margaret—the proud, the high-minded Margaret—will she subscribe to so humiliating a proceeding?"

"For the chance of seeing Lancaster triumph in England, she would resign, not only dominion, but life itself. And in truth, the sacrifice is less than it may seem to be. It is certain that, when René dies, the King of France will claim the old man's county of Provence as a male fief, and there is no one strong enough to back Margaret's claim of inheritance, however just it may be."

"It is just," said Charles; "it is undeniable. I will not hear of its being denied or challenged—that is, when once it is established in our own person. It is the true principle of the war for the public good, that none of the great fiefs be suffered to revert again to the crown of France, least of all while it stands on a brow so astucious and unprincipled as that of Louis. Burgundy joined to Provence—a dominion

from the German ocean to the Mediterranean! Oxford—thou art my better angel!"

"Your Grace must, however, reflect," said Oxford, "that honourable provision must be made for King René."

"Certainly, man, certainly; he shall have a score of fiddlers and jugglers to play, roar, and recite to him from morning till night. He shall have a court of Troubadours, who shall do nothing but drink, flute, and fiddle to him, and pronounce *arrests* of *love*, to be confirmed or reversed by an appeal to himself, the supreme *Roi d'Amour*. And Margaret shall also be honourably sustained, in the manner you may point out."

"That will be easily settled," answered the English Earl. "If our attempts on England succeed, she will need no aid from Burgundy. If she fails, she retires into a cloister, and it will not be long that she will need the honourable maintainance which, I am sure, your Grace's generosity will willingly assign her."

"Unquestionably," answered Charles; "and on a scale which will become us both;—but, by my halidome, John of Vere, the abbess into

whose cloister Margaret of Anjou shall retire, will have an ungovernable penitent under her charge. Well do I know her; and, Sir Earl, I will not clog our discourse by expressing any doubts, that, if she pleases, she can compel her father to resign his estates to whomsoever she will. She is like my brache, Gorgon, who compels whatsoever hound is coupled with her to go the way she chooses, or she strangles him if he resists. So has Margaret acted with her simple-minded husband, and I am aware that her father, a fool of a different cast, must of necessity be equally tractable. I think *I* could have matched her,—though my very neck aches at the thought of the struggles we should have had for mastery.—But you look grave, because I jest with the pertinacious temper of my unhappy cousin."

"My lord," said Oxford, "whatever are or have been the defects of my mistress, she is in distress, and almost in desolation. She is my sovereign, and your Highness's cousin not the less."

"Enough said, Sir Earl," answered the Duke. "Let us speak seriously. Whatever

we may think of the abdication of King René, I fear we shall find it difficult to make Louis XI. see the matter as favourably as we do. He will hold that the county of Provence is a male fief, and that neither the resignation of René, nor the consent of his daughter, can prevent its reverting to the crown of France, as the King of Sicily, as they call him, hath no male issue."

"That, may it please your Grace, is a question for battle to decide; and your Highness has successfully braved Louis for a less important stake. All I can say is, that, if your Grace's active assistance enables the young Earl of Richmond to succeed in his enterprise, you shall have the aid of three thousand English archers, if old John of Oxford, for want of a better leader, were to bring them over himself."

"A noble aid," said the Duke; "graced still more by him who promises to lead them. Thy succour, noble Oxford, were precious to me, did you but come with your sword by your side, and a single page at your back. I know you well,

both heart and head. But let us to this gear; exiles, even the wisest, are privileged in promises, and sometimes—excuse me, noble Oxford—impose on themselves as well as on their friends. What are the hopes on which you desire me again to embark on so troubled and uncertain an ocean, as these civil contests of yours?"

The Earl of Oxford produced a schedule, and explained to the Duke the plan of his expedition, to be backed by an insurrection of the friends of Lancaster, of which it is enough to say, that it was bold to the verge of temerity; but yet so well compacted and put together, as to bear, in those times of rapid revolution, and under a leader of Oxford's approved military skill and political sagacity, a strong appearance of probable success.

While Duke Charles mused over the particulars of an enterprise attractive and congenial to his own disposition,—while he counted over the affronts which he had received from his brother-in-law, Edward IV., the present opportunity for taking a signal revenge, and the rich acquisition which he hoped to make in

Provence by the cession in his favour of René of Anjou and his daughter, the Englishman failed not to press on his consideration the urgent necessity of suffering no time to escape.

"The accomplishment of this scheme," he said, "demands the utmost promptitude. To have a chance of success, I must be in England, with your Grace's auxiliary forces, before Edward of York can return from France with his army."

"And having come hither," said the Duke, "our worthy brother will be in no hurry to return again. He will meet with black-eyed French women and ruby-coloured French wine, and brother Blackburn is no man to leave such commodities in a hurry."

"My Lord Duke, I will speak truth of my enemy. Edward is indolent and luxurious when things are easy around him, but let him feel the spur of necessity, and he becomes as eager as a pampered steed. Louis, too, who seldom fails in finding means to accomplish his ends, is bent upon determining the English King to recross the sea—therefore, speed, noble Prince—speed is the soul of your enterprise."

"Speed!" said the Duke of Burgundy,—"Why, I will go with you, and see the embarkation myself; and tried, approved soldiers you shall have, such as are nowhere to be found save in Artois and Hainault."

"But pardon yet, noble Duke, the impatience of a drowning wretch urgently pressing for assistance.—When shall we to the coast of Flanders, to order this important measure?"

"Why, in a fortnight, or perchance a week, or, in a word, so soon as I shall have chastised to purpose a certain gang of thieves and robbers, who, as the scum of the cauldron will always be uppermost, have got up into the fastnesses of the Alps, and from thence annoy our frontiers by contraband traffic, pillage, and robbery."

"Your Highness means the Swiss confederates?"

"Ay, the peasant churls give themselves such a name. They are a sort of manumitted slaves of Austria, and, like a ban-dog, whose chain is broken, they avail themselves of their liberty to annoy and rend whatever comes in their way."

"I travelled through their country from Italy," said the exiled Earl, "and I heard it was the purpose of the Cantons to send envoys to solicit peace of your Highness."

"Peace!" exclaimed Charles.—"A proper sort of peaceful proceedings those of their embassy have been! Availing themselves of a mutiny of the burghers of La Ferette, the first garrison town which they entered, they stormed the walls, seized on Archibald de Hagenbach, who commanded the place on my part, and put him to death in the market-place. Such an insult must be punished, Sir John de Vere; and if you do not see me in the storm of passion which it well deserves, it is because I have already given orders to hang up the base runagates who call themselves ambassadors."

"For God's sake, noble Duke," said the Englishman, throwing himself at Charles's feet—"for your own character, for the sake of the peace of Christendom, revoke such an order if it is really given!"

"What means this passion?" said Duke Charles.—"What are these men's lives to thee,

excepting that the consequences of a war may delay your expedition for a few days?"

"May render it altogether abortive," said the Earl; "nay, *must* needs do so.—Hear me, Lord Duke. I was with these men on a part of their journey."

"You!" said the Duke—"you a companion of the paltry Swiss peasants? Misfortune has sunk the pride of English nobility to a low ebb, when you selected such associates."

"I was thrown amongst them by accident," said the Earl. "Some of them are of noble blood, and are, besides, men for whose peaceable intentions I venture to constitute myself their warrant."

"On my honour, my Lord of Oxford, you graced them highly, and me no less, in interfering between the Swiss and myself! Allow me to say that I condescend, when, in deference to past friendship, I permit you to speak to me of your own English affairs. Methinks you might well spare me your opinion upon topics with which you have no natural concern."

"My Lord of Burgundy," replied Oxford,

"I followed your banner to Paris, and had the good luck to rescue you in the fight at Mont L'Hery, when you were beset by the French men-at-arms"——

"We have not forgot it," said Duke Charles; "and it is a sign that we keep the action in remembrance, that you have been suffered to stand before us so long, pleading the cause of a set of rascals, whom we are required to spare from the gallows that groans for them, because forsooth they have been the fellow-travellers of the Earl of Oxford!"

"Not so, my lord. I ask their lives, only because they are upon a peaceful errand, and the leaders amongst them at least have no accession to the crime of which you complain."

The Duke traversed the apartment with unequal steps in much agitation, his large eyebrows drawn down over his eyes, his hands clenched, and his teeth set, until at length he seemed to take a resolution. He rung a hand-bell of silver, which stood upon his table.

"Here, Contay," he said to the gentleman of his chamber who entered, "are these mountain fellows yet executed?"

"No, may it please your Highness; but the executioner waits them so soon as the priest hath confessed them."

"Let them live," said the Duke. "We will hear to-morrow in what manner they propose to justify their proceedings towards us."

Contay bowed and left the apartment; then turning to the Englishman, the Duke said, with an indescribable mixture of haughtiness with familiarity and even kindness, but having his brows cleared, and his looks composed,—"We are now clear of obligation, my Lord of Oxford—you have obtained life for life—nay, to make up some inequality which there may be betwixt the value of the commodities bestowed, you have obtained six lives for one. I will, therefore, pay no more attention to you, should you again upbraid me with the stumbling horse at Mont L'Hery, or your own achievements on that occasion. Most princes are contented with privately hating such men as have rendered them extraordinary services—I feel no such disposition—I only detest being reminded of having had occasion for them.—Pshaw! I am

half-choked with the effort of foregoing my own fixed resolution.--So ho! who waits there? Bring me to drink."

An usher entered, bearing a large silver flaggon, which, instead of wine, was filled with tisanne, slightly flavoured by aromatic herbs.

"I am so hot and choleric by nature," said the Duke, "that our leeches prohibit me from drinking wine. But you, Oxford, are bound by no such regimen. Get thee to thy countryman, Colvin, the general of our artillery. We commend thee to his custody and hospitality till to-morrow, which must be a busy day, since I expect to receive the answer of these wiseacres of the Dijon assembly of estates; and have also to hear (thanks to your lordship's interference) these miserable Swiss envoys, as they call themselves. Well, no more on't.—Good night. You may communicate freely with Colvin, who is, like yourself, an old Lancastrian.—But hark ye, not a word respecting Provence—not even in your sleep.—Contay, conduct this English gentleman to Colvin's tent. He knows my pleasure respecting him."

"So please your Grace," answered Contay, "I left the English gentleman's son with Monsieur de Colvin."

"What! thine own son, Oxford? And with thee here? Why did you not tell me of him? Is he a true scion of the ancient tree?"

"It is my pride to believe so, my lord. He has been the faithful companion of all my dangers and wanderings."

"Happy man!" said the Duke, with a sigh. "You, Oxford, have a son to share your poverty and distress—I have none to be partner and successor to my greatness."

"You have a daughter, my lord," said the noble De Vere, "and it is to be hoped she will one day wed some powerful prince, who may be the stay of your Highness's house."

"Never! By Saint George, never!" answered the Duke, sharply and shortly. "I will have no son-in-law, who may make the daughter's bed a stepping-stone to reach the father's crown. Oxford, I have spoken more freely than I am wont, perhaps more freely than I ought—but I hold some men trustworthy, and believe you, Sir John de Vere, to be one of them."

The English nobleman bowed, and was about to leave his presence, but the Duke presently recalled him.

"There is one thing more, Oxford.—The cession of Provence is not quite enough. René and Margaret must disavow this hot-brained Ferrand de Vaudemont, who is making some foolish stir in Lorraine, in right of his mother Yolande."

"My lord," said Oxford, "Ferrand is the grandson of King René, the nephew of Queen Margaret; but yet"——

"But yet, by Saint George, his rights, as he calls them, on Lorraine, must positively be disowned. You talk of their family feelings, while you are urging me to make war on my own brother-in-law!"

"René's best apology for deserting his grandson," answered Oxford, "will be his total inability to support and assist him. I will communicate your Grace's condition, though it is a hard one."

So saying, he left the pavilion.

CHAPTER III.

——— I humbly thank your Highness,
And am right glad to catch this good occasion
Most thoroughly to be winnow'd, where my chaff
And corn shall fly asunder.

King Henry VIII.

Colvin, the English officer, to whom the Duke of Burgundy, with splendid pay and appointments, committed the charge of his artillery, was owner of the tent assigned for the Englishman's lodging, and received the Earl of Oxford with the respect due to his rank, and to the Duke's especial orders upon that subject. He had been himself a follower of the Lancaster faction, and of course was well disposed towards one of the very few men of distinction whom he had known personally, and who had con-

stantly adhered to that family through the train of misfortunes by which they seemed to be totally overwhelmed. A repast, of which his son had already partaken, was offered to the Earl by Colvin, who omitted not to recommend, by precept and example, the good wine of Burgundy, from which the sovereign of the province was himself obliged to refrain.

"His Grace shows command of passion in that," said Colvin. "For, sooth to speak, and only conversing betwixt friends, his temper grows too headlong to bear the spur which a cup of cordial beverage gives to the blood, and he, therefore, wisely restricts himself to such liquid as may cool rather than inflame his natural fire of disposition."

"I can perceive as much," said the Lancastrian noble. "When I first knew the noble Duke, who was then Earl of Charolois, his temper, though always sufficiently fiery, was calmness to the impetuosity which he now displays on the smallest contradiction. Such is the course of an uninterrupted flow of prosperity. He has ascended, by his own courage and the advantage

of circumstances, from the doubtful place of a feudatory and tributary prince, to rank with the most powerful sovereigns in Europe, and to assume independent majesty. But I trust the noble starts of generosity, which atoned for his wilful and wayward temper, are not more few than formerly?"

"I have good right to say that they are not," replied the soldier of fortune, who understood generosity in the restricted sense of liberality. "The Duke is a noble and open-handed master."

"I trust his bounty is conferred on men who are as faithful and steady in their service as you, Colvin, have ever been. But I see a change in your army. I know the banners of most of the old houses in Burgundy—How is it that I observe so few of them in the Duke's camp? I see flags, and pennons, and penoncelles; but even to me, who have been so many years acquainted with the nobility both of France and Flanders, their bearings are unknown."

"My noble lord of Oxford," answered the officer, "it ill becomes a man, who lives on the

Duke's pay, to censure his conduct; but his Highness hath of late trusted too much, as it seems to me, to the hired arms of foreign levies, and too little to his own native subjects and retainers. He holds it better to take into his pay large bands of German and Italian mercenary soldiers, than to repose confidence in the knights and squires, who are bound to him by allegiance and feudal faith. He uses the aid of his own subjects but as the means of producing him sums of money, which he bestows on his hired troops. The Germans are honest knaves enough while regularly paid; but Heaven preserve me from the Duke's Italian bands, and that Campobasso their leader, who waits but the highest price to sell his Highness like a sheep for the shambles!"

"Think you so ill of him?" demanded the Earl.

"So exquisitely ill, that I believe," replied Colvin, "there is no sort of treachery which the heart can devise, or the arm perpetrate, that hath not ready reception in his breast, and prompt execution at his hand. It is painful, my

lord, for an honest Englishman like me to serve in an army where such traitors have command. But what can I do, unless I could once more find me a soldier's occupation in my native country? I often hope it will please merciful Heaven again to awaken those brave civil wars in my own dear England, where all was fair fighting, and treason was unheard of."

Lord Oxford gave his host to understand, that there was a possibility that his pious wish of living and dying in his own country, and in the practice of his profession, was not to be despaired of. Meantime he requested of him, that early on the next morning he would procure him a pass and an escort for his son, whom he was compelled to dispatch forthwith to Nancy, the residence of King René.

"What!" said Colvin, "is my young Lord of Oxford to take a degree in the Court of Love, for no other business is listened to at King René's capital, save love and poetry?"

"I am not ambitious of such distinction for him, my good host," answered Oxford; "but

Queen Margaret is with her father, and it is but fitting that the youth should kiss her hand."

"Enough spoken," said the veteran Lancastrian. "I trust, though winter is fast approaching, the Red Rose may bloom in spring."

He then ushered the Earl of Oxford to the partition of the tent which he was to occupy, in which there was a couch for Arthur also—their host, as Colvin might be termed, assuring them, that, with peep of day, horses and faithful attendants should be ready to speed the youth on his journey to Nancy.

"And now, Arthur," said his father, "we must part once more. I dare give thee, in this land of danger, no written communication to my mistress, Queen Margaret; but say to her, that I have found the Duke of Burgundy wedded to his own views of interest, but not averse to combine them with hers. Say, that I have little doubt that he will grant us the required aid, but not without the expected resignation in his favour by herself and King René. Say, I would never have recommended such a sacrifice for the precarious chance of overthrowing the

House of York, but that I am satisfied that France and Burgundy are hanging like vultures over Provence, and that the one or other, or both princes, are ready, on her father's demise, to pounce on such possessions as they have reluctantly spared to him during his life. An accommodation with Burgundy may, therefore, on the one hand, ensure his active co-operation in the attempt on England; and, on the other, if our high-spirited princess complies not with the Duke's request, the justice of her cause will give no additional security to her hereditary claims on her father's dominions. Bid Queen Margaret, therefore, unless she should have changed her views, obtain King René's formal deed of cession, conveying his estates to the Duke of Burgundy, with her Majesty's consent. The necessary provisions to the King and to herself may be filled up at her Grace's pleasure, or they may be left blank. I can trust to the Duke's generosity to their being suitably arranged. All that I fear is, that Charles may embroil himself"——

"In some silly exploit, necessary for his own

honour and the safety of his dominions," answered a voice behind the lining of the tent; "and, by doing so, attend to his own affairs more than to ours? Ha, Sir Earl?"

At the same time the curtain was drawn aside, and ap erson entered; in whom, though clothed with the jerkin and bonnet of a private soldier of the Walloon guard, Oxford instantly recognised the Duke of Burgundy's harsh features and fierce eyes, as they sparkled from under the fur and feather with which the cap was ornamented.

Arthur, who knew not the Prince's person, started at the intrusion, and laid his hand on his dagger; but his father made a signal which staid his hand, and he gazed with wonder on the solemn respect with which the Earl received the intrusive soldier. The first word informed him of the cause.

"If this masking be done in proof of my faith, noble Duke, permit me to say it is superfluous."

"Nay, Oxford," answered the Duke, "I was a courteous spy; for I ceased to play the

eavesdropper, at the very moment when I had reason to expect you were about to say something to anger me."

"As I am true knight, my Lord Duke, if you had remained behind the arras, you would only have heard the same truths which I am ready to tell in your Grace's presence, though it may have chanced they might have been more bluntly expressed."

"Well, speak them then, in whatever phrase thou wilt—they lie in their throats that say Charles of Burgundy was ever offended by advice from a well-meaning friend."

"I would then have said," replied the English Earl, "that all which Margaret of Anjou had to apprehend, was that the Duke of Burgundy, when buckling on his armour to win Provence for himself, and to afford to her his powerful assistance to assert her rights in England, was likely tobe withdrawn from such high objects by an imprudently eager desire to avenge himself of imaginary affronts, offered to him, as he supposes, by certain confederacies of Alpine mountaineers, over whom it is impossible to gain

any important advantage, or acquire reputation, while, on the contrary, there is a risk of losing both. These men dwell amongst rocks and deserts which are almost inaccessible, and subsist in a manner so rude, that the poorest of your subjects would starve if subjected to such diet. They are formed by nature to be the garrison of the mountain-fortresses in which she has placed them;—for Heaven's sake meddle not with them, but follow forth your own nobler and more important objects, without stirring a nest of hornets, which, once in motion, may sting you into madness."

The Duke had promised patience, and endeavoured to keep his word; but the swoln muscles of his face, and his flashing eyes, showed how painful to him it was to suppress his resentment.

"You are misinformed, my lord," he said; "these men are not the inoffensive herdsmen and peasants you are pleased to suppose them. If they were, I might afford to despise them. But, flushed with some victories over the sluggish Austrians, they have shaken off all reve-

rence for authority, assume airs of independence, form leagues, make inroads, storm towns, doom and execute men of noble birth at their pleasure.—Thou art dull, and look'st as if thou dost not apprehend me. To rouse thy English blood, and make thee sympathize with my feelings to these mountaineers, know that these Swiss are very Scots to my dominions in their neighbourhood; poor, proud, ferocious; easily offended, because they gain by war; ill to be appeased, because they nourish deep revenge; ever ready to seize the moment of advantage, and attack a neighbour when he is engaged in other affairs. The same unquiet, perfidious, and inveterate enemies that the Scots are to England, are the Swiss to Burgundy and to my allies. What say you? Can I undertake any thing of consequence till I have crushed the pride of such a people? It will be but a few days' work. I will grasp the mountain-hedgehog, prickles and all, with my steel-gauntlet."

"Your Grace will then have shorter work with them," replied the disguised nobleman, "than our English Kings have had with Scot-

land. The wars there have lasted so long, and proved so bloody, that wise men regret we ever began them."

"Nay," said the Duke, "I will not dishonour the Scots by comparing them in all respects to these mountain-churls of the Cantons. The Scots have blood and gentry among them, and we have seen many examples of both; these Swiss are a mere brood of peasants, and the few gentlemen of birth they can boast must hide their distinction in the dress and manners of clowns. They will, I think, scarce stand against a charge of Hainaulters."

"Not if the Hainaulters find ground to ride upon. But"——

"Nay, to silence your scruples," said the Duke, interrupting him, "know, that these people encourage, by their countenance and aid, the formation of the most dangerous conspiracies in my dominions. Look here—I told you that my officer, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach, was murdered when the town of La Ferette was treacherously taken by these harmless Switzers of yours. And here is a scroll of parch-

ment, which announces that my servant was murdered by doom of the Vehmegericht, a band of secret assassins, whom I will not permit to meet in any part of my dominions. O, could I but catch them above ground as they are found lurking below, they should know what the life of a nobleman is worth! Then, look at the insolence of their attestation."

The scroll bore, with the day and date adjected, that judgment had been done on Archibald de Hagenbach, for tyranny, violence, and oppression, by order of the Holy Vehme, and that it was executed by their officials, who were responsible for the same to their tribunal alone. It was countersigned in red ink, with the badges of the Secret Society, a coil of ropes and a drawn dagger.

"This document I found stuck to my toilette with a knife," said the Duke; "another trick by which they give mystery to their murderous jugglery."

The thought of what he had undergone in John Mengs's house, and reflections upon the extent and omnipresence of these Secret As-

sociations, struck even the brave Englishman with an involuntary shudder.

"For the sake of every saint in Heaven," he said, "forbear, my lord, to speak of these tremendous societies, whose creatures are above, beneath, and around us. No man is secure of his life, however guarded, if it be sought by a man who is careless of his own. You are surrounded by Germans, Italians, and other strangers—How many amongst these may be bound by the secret ties which withdraw men from every other social bond, to unite them together in one inextricable, though secret compact? Beware, noble Prince, of the situation on which your throne is placed, though it still exhibits all the splendour of power, and all the solidity of foundation that belongs to so august a structure. I—the friend of thy house—were it with my dying breath—must needs tell thee, that the Swiss hang like an avalanche over thy head; and the Secret Associations work beneath thee like the first throes of the coming earthquake. Provoke not the contest, and the snow will rest

undisturbed on the mountain-side—the agitation of the subterranean vapours will be hushed to rest; but a single word of defiance, or one flash of indignant scorn, may call their terrors into instant action."

"You speak," said the Duke, "with more awe of a pack of naked churls, and a band of midnight assassins, than I have seen you show for real danger. Yet I will not scorn your counsel—I will hear the Swiss envoys patiently, and I will not, if I can help it, show the contempt with which I cannot but regard their pretensions to treat as independent states. On the Secret Associations I will be silent, till time gives me the means of acting in combination with the Emperor, the Diet, and the Princes of the Empire, that they may be driven from all their burrows at once.—Ha, Sir Earl, said I well?"

"It is well thought, my lord, but it may be unhappily spoken. You are in a position, where one word overheard by a traitor, might produce death and ruin."

"I keep no traitors about me," said Charles. "If I thought there were such in my camp, I

would rather die by them at once, than live in perpetual terror and suspicion."

"Your Highness's ancient followers and servants," said the Earl, "speak unfavourably of the Count of Campo-basso, who holds so high a rank in your confidence."

"Ay," replied the Duke, with composure, "it is easy to decry the most faithful servant in a court by the unanimous hatred of all the others. I warrant me your bull-headed countryman, Colvin, has been railing against the Count like the rest of them, for Campo-basso sees nothing amiss in any department but he reports it to me without fear or favour. And then his opinions are cast so much in the same mould with my own, that I can hardly get him to enlarge upon what he best understands, if it seems in any respect different from my sentiments. Add to this, a noble person, grace, gaiety, skill in the exercises of war, and in the courtly arts of peace—such is Campo-basso; and being such, is he not a gem for a prince's cabinet?"

"The very materials out of which a favourite is formed," answered the Earl of Oxford, "but

something less adapted for making a faithful counsellor."

"Why, thou mistrustful fool," said the Duke, "must I tell thee the very inmost secret respecting this man, Campo-basso, and will nothing short of it stay these imaginary suspicions which thy new trade of an itinerant merchant hath led thee to entertain so rashly?"

"If your Majesty honours me with your confidence," said the Earl of Oxford, "I can only say that my fidelity shall deserve it."

"Know, then, thou misbelieving mortal, that my good friend and brother, Louis of France, sent me private information through no less a person than his famous barber, Oliver le Diable, that Campo-basso had for a certain sum offered to put my person into his hands, alive or dead.—You start?"

"I do indeed—recollecting your Highness's practice of riding out lightly armed, and with a very small attendance, to reconnoitre the ground and visit the out-posts, and therefore how easily such a treacherous device might be carried into execution."

"Pshaw!" answered the Duke.—"Thou seest the danger as if it were real, whereas nothing can be more certain than that, if my cousin of France had ever received such an offer, he would have been the last person to have put me on my guard against the attempt. No—he knows the value I set on Campo-basso's services, and forged the accusation to deprive me of them."

"And yet, my lord," replied the English Earl, "your Highness, by my counsel, will not unnecessarily or impatiently fling aside your armour of proof, or ride without the escort of some score of your trusty Walloons."

"Tush, man, thou wouldst make a carbonado of a fever-stirred wretch like myself, betwixt the bright iron and the burning sun. But I will be cautious though I jest thus—and you, young man, may assure my cousin, Margaret of Anjou, that I will consider her affairs as my own. And remember, youth, that the secrets of princes are fatal gifts, if he to whom they are imparted blaze them abroad; but if duly treasured up, they enrich the bearer. And thou

shalt have cause to say so, if thou canst bring back with thee from Nancy the deed of resignation, of which thy father has spoken.—Good night—good night!"

He left the apartment.

"You have just seen," said the Earl of Oxford to his son, "a sketch of this extraordinary prince, by his own pencil. It is easy to excite his ambition or thirst of power, but wellnigh impossible to limit him to the just measures by which it is most likely to be gratified. He is ever like the young archer, startled from his mark by some swallow crossing his eye, even as he draws the string. Now irregularly and offensively suspicious—now unreservedly lavish of his confidence—not long since the enemy of the line of Lancaster, and the ally of her deadly foe—now its last and only stay and hope. God mend all!—It is a weary thing to look on the game and see how it might be won, while we are debarred by the caprice of others from the power of playing it according to our own skill. How much must depend on the decision of Duke Charles upon the morrow, and how little do I possess the

power of influencing him, either for his own safety or our advantage! Good night, my son, and let us trust events to Him who alone can control them."

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL *

CHAPTER IV.

My blood hath been too cold and temperate,
Unapt to stir at these indignities,
And you have found me; for, accordingly,
You tread upon my patience.

Henry IV.

The dawn of morning roused the banished Earl of Oxford and his son, and its lights were scarce abroad on the eastern heaven, ere their host, Colvin, entered with an attendant, bearing some bundles, which he placed on the floor of the tent, and instantly retired. The officer of the Duke's ordnance then announced, that he came with a message from the Duke of Burgundy.

"His Highness," he said, "has sent four stout yeomen, with a commission of credence to my young master of Oxford, and an ample

purse of gold, to furnish his expenses to Aix, and while his affairs may detain him there. Also a letter of credence to King René, to ensure his reception, and two suits of honour for his use, as for an English gentleman, desirous to witness the festive solemnities of Provence, and in whose safety the Duke deigns to take deep interest. His farther affairs there, if he hath any, his Highness recommends to him to manage with prudence and secrecy. His Highness hath also sent a couple of horses for his use,—one an ambling jennet for the road, and another a strong barbed horse of Flanders, in case he hath aught to do. It will be fitting that my young master change his dress, and assume attire more near his proper rank. His attendants know the road, and have power, in case of need, to summon, in the Duke's name, assistance from all faithful Burgundians. I have but to add, the sooner the young gentleman sets forward, it will be the better sign of a successful journey."

"I am ready to mount, the instant that I have changed my dress," said Arthur.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI

"And I," said his father, "have no wish to detain him on the service in which he is now employed. Neither he nor I will say more than God be with you. How and where we are to meet again, who can tell?"

"I believe," said Colvin, "that must rest on the motions of the Duke, which, perchance, are not yet determined upon; but his Highness depends upon your remaining with him, my noble lord, till the affairs of which you come to treat may be more fully decided. Something I have for your lordship's private ear, when your son hath parted on his journey."

While Colvin was thus talking with his father, Arthur, who was not above half-dressed when he entered the tent, had availed himself of an obscure corner, in which he exchanged the plain dress belonging to his supposed condition as a merchant, for such a riding suit as became a young man of some quality attached to the court of Burgundy. It was not without a natural sensation of pleasure, that the youth resumed an apparel suitable to his birth, and which no one was personally more fitted to be-

come; but it was with much deeper feeling that he hastily, and as secretly as possible, flung round his neck, and concealed under the collar and folds of his ornamented doublet, a small thin chain of gold, curiously linked in what was called Morisco work. This was the contents of the parcel which Anne of Geierstein had indulged his feelings, and perhaps her own, by putting into his hands as they parted. The chain was secured by a slight plate of gold, on which a bodkin, or a point of a knife, had traced on the one side, in distinct though light characters, the words ADIEU FOR EVER! while, on the reverse, there was much more obscurely traced, the word REMEMBER!—A. VON G.

All who may read this are, have been, or will be, lovers; and there is none, therefore, who may not be able to comprehend why this token was carefully suspended around Arthur's neck, so that the inscription might rest on the region of his heart, without the interruption of any substance which could prevent the pledge from being agitated by every throb of that busy organ.

This being hastily ensured, a few minutes

completed the rest of his toilette; and he kneeled before his father to ask his blessing, and his further commands for Aix.

His father blessed him almost inarticulately, and then said, with recovered firmness, that he was already possessed of all the knowledge necessary for success on his mission.

"When you can bring me the deeds wanted," he whispered with more firmness, "you will find me near the person of the Duke of Burgundy."

They went forth of the tent in silence, and found before it the four Burgundian yeomen, tall and active-looking men, ready mounted themselves, and holding two saddled horses—the one accoutred for war, the other a spirited jennet, for the purposes of the journey. One of them led a sumpter-horse, on which Colvin informed Arthur he would find the change of habit necessary when he should arrive at Aix; and at the same time delivered to him a heavy purse of gold.

"Thiebault," he continued, pointing out the eldest of the attendant troopers, "may be trusted—I will be warrant for his sagacity and fide-

lity. The other three are picked men, who will not fear their skin-cutting."

Arthur vaulted into the saddle with a sensation of pleasure, which was natural to a young cavalier who had not for many months felt a spirited horse beneath him. The lively jennet reared with impatience. Arthur, sitting firm on his seat, as if he had been a part of the animal, only said, "Ere we are long acquainted, thy spirit, my fair roan, will be something more tamed."

"One word more, my son," said his father, and whispered in Arthur's ear, as he stooped from the saddle; "if you receive a letter from me, do not think yourself fully acquainted with the contents till the paper has been held opposite to a hot fire."

Arthur bowed, and motioned to the elder trooper to lead the way, when all, giving rein to their horses, rode off through the encampment at a round pace, the young leader signing an adieu to his father and Colvin.

The Earl stood like a man in a dream, following his son with his eyes, in a kind of reverie, which was only broken when Colvin said,

"I marvel not, my lord, that you are anxious about my young master; he is a gallant youth, well worth a father's caring for, and the times we live in are both false and bloody."

"God and St Mary be my witness," said the Earl, "that if I grieve, it is not for my own house only;—if I am anxious, it is not for the sake of my own son alone;—but it is hard to risk a last stake in a cause so perilous.—What commands brought you from the Duke?"

"His Grace," said Colvin, "will get on horseback after he has breakfasted. He sends you some garments, which, if not fitting your quality, are yet nearer to suitable apparel than those you now wear, and he desires that, observing your incognito as an English merchant of eminence, you will join him in his cavalcade to Dijon, where he is to receive the answer of the Estates of Burgundy concerning matters submitted to their consideration, and thereafter give public audience to the Deputies from Switzerland. His Highness has charged me with the care of finding you suitable accommodation during the ceremonies of the day, which, he

thinks, you will, as a stranger, be pleased to look upon. But he probably told you all this himself, for I think you saw him last night in disguise—Nay, look as strange as you will—the Duke plays that trick too often to be able to do it with secrecy; the very horse-boys know him while he traverses the tents of the common soldiery, and sutler-women give him the name of the spied spy. If it were only honest Harry Colvin who knew this, it should not cross his lips. But it is practised too openly, and too widely known. Come, noble lord, though I must teach my tongue to forego that courtesy, will you along to breakfast?"

The meal, according to the practice of the time, was a solemn and solid one; and a favoured officer of the Great Duke of Burgundy lacked no means, it may be believed, of rendering due hospitality to a guest having claims of such high respect. But ere the breakfast was over, a clamorous flourish of trumpets announced that the Duke, with his attendants and retinue, were sounding to horse. Philipson, as he was still called, was, in the name of the Duke, present-

ed with a stately charger, and with his host mingled in the splendid assembly which began to gather in front of the Duke's pavilion. In a few minutes, the Prince himself issued forth, in the superb dress of the Order of the Golden Fleece, of which his father, Philip, had been the founder, and Charles was himself the patron and sovereign. Several of his courtiers were dressed in the same magnificent robes, and with their followers and attendants, displayed so much wealth and splendour of appearance, as to warrant the common saying, that the Duke of Burgundy maintained the most magnificent court in Christendom. The officers of his household attended in their order, together with heralds and pursuivants, the grotesque richness of whose habits had a singular effect among those of the high clergy in their albes and dalmatiques, and of the knights and crown vassals who were arrayed in armour. Among these last, who were variously equipped, according to the different character of their service, rode Oxford, but in a peaceful habit, neither so plain as to be out of place amongst such splendour, nor so rich

as to draw on him a special or particular degree of attention. He rode by the side of Colvin, his tall muscular figure, and deep-marked features, forming a strong contrast to the rough careless cast of countenance, and stout thick-set form, of the less distinguished soldier of fortune.

Ranged into a solemn procession, the rear of which was closed by a guard of two hundred picked arquebusiers, a description of soldiers who were just then coming into notice, and as many mounted men-at-arms, the Duke and his retinue, leaving the barriers of the camp, directed their march to the town, or rather city, of Dijon, in those days the capital of all Burgundy.

It was a town well secured with walls and ditches, which last were filled by means of a small river, named Dousche, which combines its waters for that purpose with a torrent called Suzon. Four gates, with appropriate barbicans, outworks, and drawbridges, corresponded nearly to the cardinal points of the compass, and gave admission to the city. The number of towers, which stood high above its walls,

and defended them at different angles, was thirty-three; and the walls themselves, which exceeded in most places the height of thirty feet, were built of stones hewn and squared, and were of great thickness. This stately city was surrounded on the outside with hills covered with vineyards, while from within its walls rose the towers of many noble buildings, both public and private, as well as the steeples of magnificent churches, and of well-endowed convents, attesting the wealth and devotion of the House of Burgundy.

When the trumpets of the Duke's procession had summoned the burgher guard at the gate of St Nicholas, the drawbridge fell, the portcullis rose, the people shouted joyously, the windows were hung with tapestry, and as, in the midst of his retinue, Charles himself came riding on a milk-white steed, attended only by six pages under fourteen years old, with each a gilded partisan in his hand, the acclamations with which he was received on all sides, showed that, if some instances of misrule had diminished his popularity, enough of it remained to ren-

der his reception into his capital decorous at least, if not enthusiastic. It is probable that the veneration attached to his father's memory counteracted for a long time the unfavourable effect which some of his own actions were calculated to produce on the public mind.

The procession halted before a large Gothic building in the centre of Dijon. This was then called, Maison du Duc, as, after the union of Burgundy with France, it was termed Maison du Roy. The Maire of Dijon attended on the steps before this palace, accompanied by his official brethren, and escorted by a hundred able-bodied citizens, in black velvet cloaks, bearing half pikes in their hands. The Maire kneeled to kiss the stirrup of the Duke, and at the moment when Charles descended from his horse every bell in the city commenced so thundering a peal, that they might almost have awakened the dead who slept in the vicinity of the steeples, which rocked with their clangor. Under the influence of this stunning peal of welcome, the Duke entered the great hall of the building, at the upper end of which was erect-

ed a throne for the sovereign, seats for his more distinguished officers of state and higher vassals, with benches behind for persons of less note. On one of these, but in a spot from which he might possess a commanding view of the whole assembly, as well as of the Duke himself, Colvin placed the noble Englishman; and Charles, whose quick stern eye glanced rapidly over the party when they were seated, seemed, by a nod so slight as to be almost imperceptible to those around him, to give his approbation of the arrangement adopted.

When the Duke and his assistants were seated and in order, the Maire, again approaching, in the most humble manner, and kneeling on the lowest step of the ducal throne, requested to know if his Highness's leisure permitted him to hear the inhabitants of his capital express their devoted zeal to his person, and to accept the benevolence which, in the shape of a silver cup filled with gold pieces, he had the distinguished honour to place before his feet, in name of the citizens and community of Dijon.

Charles, who at no time affected much cour-

tesy, answered briefly and bluntly, with a voice which was naturally harsh and dissonant, "All things in their order, good Master Maire. Let us first hear what the Estates of Burgundy have to say to us; we will then listen to the burghers of Dijon."

The Maire rose and retired, bearing in his hand the silver cup, and experiencing probably some vexation, as well as surprise, that its contents had not secured an instant and gracious acceptance.

"I expected," said Duke Charles, "to have met at this hour and place our Estates of the duchy of Burgundy, or a deputation of them, with an answer to our message conveyed to them three days since by our chancellor. Is there no one here on their part?"

The Maire, as none else made any attempt to answer, said that the members of the Estates had been in close deliberation the whole of that morning, and doubtless would instantly wait upon his Highness when they heard that he had honoured the town with his presence.

"Go, Toison d'Or," said the Duke to the he-

rald of the order of the Golden Fleece, "bear to these gentlemen the tidings that we desire to know the end of their deliberations; and that neither in courtesy nor in loyalty can they expect us to wait long. Be round with them, Sir Herald, or we shall be as round with you."

While the herald was absent on his mission, we may remind our readers, that in all feudalized countries, (that is to say, in almost all Europe during the middle ages,) an ardent spirit of liberty pervaded the constitution; and the only fault that could be found was, that the privileges and freedom for which the great vassals contended did not descend to the lower orders of society, or extend protection to those who were most likely to need it. The two first ranks in the estate, the nobles and clergy, enjoyed high and important privileges, and even the third estate, or citizens, had this immunity in peculiar, that no new duties, customs, or taxes of any kind, could be exacted from them save by their own consent.

The memory of Duke Philip was dear to the Burgundians; for during twenty years that sage

prince had maintained his rank amongst the sovereigns of Europe with much dignity, and had accumulated treasure without exacting or receiving any increase of supplies from the rich countries which he governed. But the extravagant schemes and immoderate expense of Duke Charles had already excited the suspicion of his Estates; and the mutual good-will betwixt the prince and people began to be exchanged for suspicion and distrust on the one side, and defiance on the other. The refractory disposition of the Estates had of late increased; for they had disapproved of various wars in which their Duke had needlessly embarked, and from his levying such large bodies of mercenary troops, they came to suspect he might finally employ the wealth voted to him by his subjects, for the undue extension of his royal prerogative, and the destruction of the liberties of the people.

At the same time, the Duke's uniform success in enterprises which appeared desperate as well as difficult, esteem for the frankness and openness of his character, and dread of the obstinacy and headstrong tendency of a temper

which could seldom bear persuasion, and never endured opposition, still threw awe and terror around the throne, which was materially aided by the attachment of the common people to the person of the present Duke and to the memory of his father. It had been understood, that upon the present occasion there was strong opposition amongst the Estates to the system of taxation proposed on the part of the Duke, and the issue was expected with considerable anxiety by the Duke's counsellors, and with fretful impatience by the sovereign himself.

After a space of about ten minutes had elapsed, the Chancellor of Burgundy, who was Archbishop of Vienne, and a prelate of high rank, entered the hall with his train; and passing behind the ducal throne to occupy one of the most distinguished places in the assembly, he stopped for a moment to urge his master to receive the answer of his Estates in a private manner, giving him at the same time to understand, that the result of the deliberations had been by no means satisfactory.

"By Saint George of Burgundy, my Lord

Archbishop," answered the Duke, sternly and aloud, "we are not a prince of a mind so paltry that we need to shun the moody looks of a discontented and insolent faction. If the Estates of Burgundy send a disobedient and disloyal answer to our paternal message, let them deliver it in open court, that the assembled people may learn how to decide between their Duke and those petty yet intriguing spirits, who would interfere with our authority."

The chancellor bowed gravely, and took his seat; while the Lancastrian Earl observed, that most of the members of the assembly, excepting such as in doing so could not escape the Duke's notice, passed some observations to their neighbours, which were received with a half-expressed nod, shrug, or shake of the head, as men treat a proposal upon which it is dangerous to decide. At the same time, Toison d'Or, who acted as master of the ceremonies, introduced into the hall a committee of the Estates, consisting of twelve members, four from each branch of the Estates, announced as empowered

to deliver the answer of that assembly to the Duke of Burgundy.

When the deputation entered the hall, Charles arose from his throne, according to ancient custom, and taking from his head his bonnet, charged with a huge plume of feathers, "Health and welcome," he said, "to my good subjects of the Estates!" All the numerous train of courtiers rose and uncovered their heads with the same ceremony. The members of the states then dropt on one knee, the four ecclesiastics, among whom Oxford recognised the Black Priest of St Paul's, approaching nearest to the Duke's person, the nobles kneeling behind them, and the burgesses in the rear of the whole.

"Noble Duke," said the Priest of St Paul's, "will it best please you to hear the answer of your good and loyal Estates of Burgundy by the voice of one member speaking for the whole, or by three persons, each delivering the sense of the body to which he belongs?"

"As you will," said the Duke of Burgundy.

"A priest, a noble, and a free burgher," said the churchman, still on one knee, "will address your highness in succession. For though, blessed be the God who leads brethren to dwell together in unity! we are agreed in the general answer, yet each body of the Estates may have special and separate reasons to allege for the common opinion."

"We will hear you separately," said Duke Charles, casting his hat upon his head, and throwing himself carelessly back into his seat. At the same time, all who were of noble blood, whether in the committee or amongst the spectators, vouched their right to be peers of their sovereign by assuming their bonnets; and a cloud of waving plumes at once added grace and dignity to the assembly.

When the Duke resumed his seat, the deputation arose from their knees, and the Black Priest of Saint Paul's, again stepping forth, addressed him in these words:—

"My Lord Duke, your loyal and faithful clergy have considered your Highness's proposal to lay a talliage on your people, in order to

make war on the confederate Cantons in the country of the Alps. The quarrel, my liege lord, seems to your clergy an unjust and oppressive one on your Highness's part; nor can they hope that God will bless those who arm in it. They are therefore compelled to reject your Highness's proposal."

The Duke's eye lowered gloomily on the deliverer of this unpalatable message. He shook his head with one of those stern and menacing looks which the harsh composition of his features rendered them peculiarly qualified to express. "You have spoken, Sir Priest," was the only reply which he deigned to make.

One of the four nobles, the Sire de Myrebeau, then expressed himself thus:—

"Your Highness has asked of your faithful nobles to consent to new imposts and exactions, to be levied through Burgundy, for the raising of additional bands of hired soldiers for the maintenance of the quarrels of the state. My lord, the swords of the Burgundian nobles, knights, and gentlemen, have been ever at your Highness's command, as those of our ancestors have

been readily wielded for your predecessors. In your Highness's just quarrel we will go farther, and fight firmer, than any hired fellows who can be procured, whether from France, or Germany, or Italy. We will not give our consent that the people should be taxed for paying mercenaries to discharge that military duty which it is alike our pride and our exclusive privilege to render."

"You have spoken, Sire de Myrebeau," were again the only words of the Duke's reply. He uttered them slowly and with deliberation, as if afraid lest some phrase of imprudent violence should escape along with what he purposed to say. Oxford thought he cast a glance towards him before he spoke, as if the consciousness of his presence was some additional restraint on his passion. "Now, Heaven grant," he said to himself, "that this opposition may work its proper effect, and induce the Duke to renounce an imprudent attempt, so hazardous and so unnecessary!"

While he muttered these thoughts, the Duke made a sign to one of the *tiers état*, or commons,

to speak in his turn. The person who obeyed the signal was Martin Blok, a wealthy butcher and grazier of Dijon. His words were these:—

"Noble Prince, our fathers were the dutiful subjects of your predecessors; we are the same to you; our children will be alike the liegemen of your successors. But, touching the request your chancellor has made to us, it is such as our ancestors never complied with; such as we are determined to refuse, and such as will never be conceded by the Estates of Burgundy, to any prince whatsoever, even to the end of time."

Charles had borne with impatient silence the speeches of the two former orators, but this blunt and hardy reply of the third Estate, excited him beyond what his nature could endure. He gave way to the impetuosity of his disposition, stamped on the floor till the throne shook, and the high vault rung over their heads, and overwhelmed the bold burgher with reproaches. "Beast of burden," he said, "am I to be stunned with thy braying, too? The nobles may claim leave to speak, for they can

fight; the clergy may use their tongues, for it is their trade; but thou, that hast never shed blood, save that of bullocks, not more stupid than thou art thyself—must thou and thy herd come hither, privileged, forsooth, to bellow at a prince's footstool? Know, brute as thou art, that steers are never introduced into temples but to be sacrificed, or butchers and mechanics brought before their sovereign, save that they may have the honour to supply the public wants from their own swelling hoards!"

A murmur of displeasure, which even the terror of the Duke's wrath could not repress, ran through the audience at these words; and the burgher of Dijon, a sturdy plebeian, replied, with little reverence,—"Our purses, my Lord Duke, are our own—we will not put the strings of them into your Highness's hands, unless we are satisfied with the purposes to which the money is to be applied; and we know well how to protect our persons and our goods against foreign ruffians and plunderers."

Charles was on the point of ordering the deputy to be arrested, when, having cast his

eye towards the Earl of Oxford, whose presence, in despite of himself, imposed a certain degree of restraint upon him, he exchanged that piece of imprudence for another.

"I see," he said, addressing the committee of Estates, "that you are all leagued to disappoint my purposes, and doubtless to deprive me of all the power of a sovereign, save that of wearing a coronet, and being served on the knee like a second Charles the Simple, while the Estates of my kingdom divide the power among them. But you shall know that you have to do with Charles of Burgundy, a prince, who, though he has deigned to consult you, is fully able to fight battles without the aid of his nobles, since they refuse him the assistance of their swords—to defray the expense without the help of his sordid burghers—and, it may be, to find out a path to heaven without the assistance of an ungrateful priesthood. I will show all that are here present, how little my mind is affected, or my purpose changed, by your seditious reply to the message with which I ho-

noured you.—Here, Toison d'Or, admit into our presence these men from the confederated towns and cantons, as they call themselves, of Switzerland."

Oxford, and all who really interested themselves in the Duke's welfare, heard, with the utmost apprehension, his resolution to give an audience to the Swiss Envoys, prepossessed as he was against them, and in the moment when his mood was chafed to the uttermost by the refusal of the Estates to grant him supplies. They were aware that obstacles opposed to the current of his passion, were like rocks in the bed of a river, whose course they cannot interrupt, while they provoke it to rage and foam. All were sensible that the die was cast, but none who were not endowed with more than mortal prescience, could have imagined how deep was the pledge which depended upon it. Oxford, in particular, conceived that the execution of his plan of a descent upon England, was the principal point compromised by the Duke in his rash obstinacy; but he sus-

pected not—he dreamed not of supposing—that the life of Charles himself, and the independence of Burgundy as a separate kingdom, hung quivering in the same scales.

CHAPTER V.

Why, 'tis a boisterous and cruel style,
A style for challengers. Why, she defies us,
Like Turk to Christian.

As You Like It.

The doors of the hall were now opened to the Swiss deputies, who for the preceding hour had been kept in attendance on the outside of the building, without receiving the slightest of those attentions, which among civilized nations are universally paid to the representatives of a foreign state. Indeed, their very appearance, dressed in coarse grey frocks, like mountain hunters or shepherds, in the midst of an assembly blazing with divers-coloured garments, gold and silver lace, embroidery, and precious stones, served to confirm the idea that they could only have come hither in the capacity of the most humble petitioners.

Oxford, however, who watched closely the deportment of his late fellow-travellers, failed not to observe that they retained each in his own person the character of firmness and indifference which formerly distinguished them. Rudolf Donnerhugel preserved his bold and haughty look; the Banneret, the military indifference which made him look with apparent apathy on all around him; the burgher of Soleure was as formal and important as ever; nor did any of the three show themselves affected in the slightest degree by the splendour of the scene around them, or embarrassed by the consideration of their own comparative inferiority of appointments. But the noble Landamman, on whom Oxford chiefly bent his attention, seemed overwhelmed with a sense of the precarious state in which his country was placed; fearing, from the rude and unhonoured manner in which they were received, that war was unavoidable, while, at the same time, like a good patriot, he mourned over the consequences of ruin to the freedom of his country by defeat, or injury to her sim-

plicity and virtuous indifference of wealth, by the introduction of foreign luxuries and the evils attending on conquest.

Well acquainted with the opinions of Arnold Biederman, Oxford could easily explain his sadness, while his comrade Bonstetten, less capable of comprehending his friend's feelings, looked at him with the expression which may be seen in the countenance of a faithful dog, when the creature indicates sympathy with his master's melancholy, though unable to ascertain or appreciate its cause. A look of wonder now and then glided around the splendid assembly on the part of all the forlorn group, excepting Donnerhugel and the Landamman; for the indomitable pride of the one, and the steady patriotism of the other, could not for even an instant be diverted by external objects from their own deep and stern reflections.

After a silence of nearly five minutes, the Duke spoke, with the haughty and harsh manner which he might imagine belonged to his place, and which certainly expressed his character.

"Men of Berne, of Schwitz, or of whatever hamlet and wilderness you may represent, know that we had not honoured you, rebels as you are to the dominion of your lawful superiors, with an audience in our own presence, but for the intercession of a well-esteemed friend, who has sojourned among your mountains, and whom you may know by the name of Philipson, an Englishman, following the trade of a merchant, and charged with certain valuable matters of traffic to our court. To his intercession we have so far given way, that instead of commanding you, according to your demerits, to the gibbet and the wheel in the Place de Morimont, we have condescended to receive you into our own presence, sitting in our *cour plénière*, to hear from you such submission as you can offer for your outrageous storm of our town of La Ferette, the slaughter of many of our liegemen, and the deliberate murder of the noble knight, Archibald of Hagenbach, executed in your presence, and by your countenance and device. Speak—if you can say aught in defence of your

felony and treason, either to deprecate just punishment, or crave undeserved mercy."

The Landamman seemed about to answer; but Rudolf Donnerhugel, with his characteristic boldness and hardihood, took the task of reply on himself. He confronted the proud Duke with an eye unappalled, and a countenance as stern as his own.

"We came not here," he said, "to compromise our own honour, or the dignity of the free people whom we represent, by pleading guilty in their name, or our own, to crimes of which we are innocent. And when you term us rebels, you must remember, that a long train of victories, whose history is written in the noblest blood of Austria, has restored to the confederacy of our communities the freedom, of which an unjust tyranny in vain attempted to deprive us. While Austria was a just and beneficent mistress, we served her with our lives;—when she became oppressive and tyrannical, we assumed independence. If she has aught yet to claim from us, the descendants of Tell, Faust, and Stauffenbach, will be as rea-

dy to assert their liberties as their fathers were to gain them. Your Grace—if such be your title—has no concern with any dispute betwixt us and Austria. For your threats of gibbet and wheel, we are here defenceless men, on whom you may work your pleasure; but we know how to die, and our countrymen know how to avenge us."

The fiery Duke would have replied by commanding the instant arrest, and probably the immediate execution, of the whole deputation. But his chancellor, availing himself of the privilege of his office, rose, and doffing his cap with a deep reverence to the Duke, requested leave to reply to the misproud young man, who had, he said, so greatly mistaken the purpose of his Highness's speech.

Charles, feeling perhaps at the moment too much irritated to form a calm decision, threw himself back in his chair of state, and with an impatient and angry nod, gave his chancellor permission to speak.

"Young man," said that high officer, "you have mistaken the meaning of the high and

mighty sovereign, in whose presence you stand. Whatever be the lawful rights of Austria over the revolted villages which have flung off their allegiance to their native superior, we have no call to enter on that argument. But that for which Burgundy demands your answer, is wherefore, coming here in the guise, and with the character, of peaceful envoys, on affairs touching your own communities and the rights of the Duke's subjects, you have raised war in our peaceful dominions, stormed a fortress, massacred its garrison, and put to death a noble knight, its commander?—all of them actions contrary to the law of nations, and highly deserving of the punishment with which you have been justly threatened, but with which I hope our gracious sovereign will dispense, if you express some sufficient reason for such outrageous insolence, with an offer of due submission to his Highness's pleasure, and satisfactory reparation for such a high injury."

"You are a priest, grave sir?" answered Rudolf Donnerhugel, addressing the Chancellor of

Burgundy. "If there be a soldier in this assembly who will avouch your charge, I challenge him to the combat, man to man. We did not storm the garrison of La Ferette—we were admitted into the gates in a peaceful manner, and were there instantly surrounded by the soldiers of the late Archibald de Hagenbach, with the obvious purpose of assaulting and murdering us on our peaceful mission. I promise you there had been news of more men dying than us. But an uproar broke out among the inhabitants of the town, assisted, I believe, by many neighbours, to whom the insolence and oppression of Archibald de Hagenbach had become odious, as to all who were within his reach. We rendered them no assistance; and, I trust, it was not expected that we should interfere in the favour of men who had stood prepared to do the worst against us. But not a pike or sword belonging to us or our attendants was dipped in Burgundian blood. Archibald de Hagenbach perished, it is true, on a scaffold, and I saw him die with pleasure, under a sentence pronounced by a competent court, such as is recognised in Westphalia, and

its dependencies on this side of the Rhine. I am not obliged to vindicate their proceedings; but I aver, that the Duke has received full proof of his regular sentence; and, in fine, that it was amply deserved by oppression, tyranny, and foul abuse of his authority, I will uphold against all gainsayers, with the body of a man. There lies my glove."

And, with an action suited to the language he used, the stern Swiss flung his right-hand glove on the floor of the hall. In the spirit of the age, with the love of distinction in arms which it nourished, and perhaps with the desire of gaining the Duke's favour, there was a general motion among the young Burgundians to accept the challenge, and more than six or eight gloves were hastily doffed by the young knights present, those who were more remote flinging them over the heads of the nearest, and each proclaiming his name and title as he proffered the gage of combat.

"I set at all," said the daring young Swiss, gathering the gauntlets as they fell clashing around him. "More, gentlemen, more! a glove

for every finger! come on, one at once—fair lists, equal judges of the field, the combat on foot, and the weapons two-handed swords, and I will not budge for a score of you."

"Hold, gentlemen; on your allegiance, hold," said the Duke, gratified at the same time, and somewhat appeased, by the zeal which was displayed in his cause—moved by the strain of reckless bravery evinced by the challenger, with a hardihood akin to his own—perhaps also not unwilling to display, in the view of his *cour plénière*, more temperance than he had been at first capable of. "Hold, I command you all.—Toison d'Or, gather up these gauntlets, and return them each to his owner. God and St George forbid that we should hazard the life of even the least of our noble Burgundian gentry against such a churl as this Swiss peasant, who never so much as mounted a horse, and knows not a jot of knightly courtesy, or the grace of chivalry.—Carry your vulgar brawls elsewhere, young man, and know that, on the present occasion, the Place Morimont were your only fitting lists, and the hangman your meet antagonist. And

you, sirs, his companions—whose behaviour in suffering this swaggerer to take the lead amongst you, seems to show that the laws of nature, as well as of society, are inverted, and that age is preferred to youth, as gentry to peasants—you white-bearded men, I say, is there none of you who can speak your errand in such language as it becomes a sovereign prince to listen to?"

"God forbid else," said the Landamman, stepping forward and silencing Rudolf Donnerhugel, who was commencing an answer of defiance—"God forbid," he said, "noble Duke, that we should not be able to speak so as to be understood before your Highness, since, I trust, we shall speak the language of truth, peace, and justice. Nay, should it incline your Highness to listen to us the more favourably for our humility, I am willing to humble myself rather than you should shun to hear us. For my own part, I can truly say, that, though I have lived, and by free choice have resolved to die, a husbandman and a hunter on the Alps of the Unterwald, I may claim by birth the hereditary right to speak before Dukes and Kings, and the Emperor himself. There is no one, my Lord Duke, in this

proud assembly, who derives his descent from a nobler source than Geierstein."

"We have heard of you," said the Duke. "Men call you the peasant-count. Your birth is your shame; or perhaps your mother's, if your father had happened to have a handsome ploughman, the fitting father of one who has become a willing serf."

"No serf, my lord," answered the Landamman, "but a freeman, who will neither oppress others, nor be himself tyrannized over. My father was a noble lord, my mother a most virtuous lady. But I will not be provoked, by taunt or scornful jest, to refrain from stating with calmness what my country has given me in charge to say. The inhabitants of the bleak and inhospitable regions of the Alps desire, mighty sir, to remain at peace with all their neighbours, and to enjoy the government they have chosen, as best fitted to their condition and habits, leaving all other states and countries to their free will in the same respects. Especially, they desire to remain at peace and in unity with the princely House of Burgundy, whose dominions approach their

possessions on so many points. My lord, they desire it, they entreat it, they even consent to pray for it. We have been termed stubborn, intractable, and insolent contemners of authority, and headers of sedition and rebellion. In evidence of the contrary, my Lord Duke, I, who never bent a knee but to Heaven, feel no dishonour in kneeling before your Highness, as before a sovereign prince in the *cour plénière* of his dominions, where he has a right to exact homage from his subjects out of duty, and from strangers out of courtesy. No vain pride of mine," said the noble old man, his eyes swelling with tears, as he knelt on one knee, "shall prevent me from personal humiliation, when peace,—that blessed peace, so dear to God, so inappreciably valuable to man—is in danger of being broken off."

The whole assembly, even the Duke himself, were affected by the noble and stately manner in which the brave old man made a genuflection, which was obviously dictated by neither meanness nor timidity. "Arise, sir," said Charles; "if we have said aught which can

wound your private feelings, we retract it as publicly as the reproach was spoken, and sit prepared to hear you, as a fair-meaning envoy."

"For that, my noble Lord, thanks; and I shall hold it a blessed day, if I can find words worthy of the cause I have to plead. My Lord, a schedule in your Highness's hands has stated the sense of many injuries received at the hand of your Highness's officers, and those of Romont, Count of Savoy, your strict ally and adviser, we have a right to suppose, under your Highness's countenance. For Count Romont—he has already felt with whom he has to contend; but we have as yet taken no measures to avenge injuries, affronts, interruptions to our commerce, from those who have availed themselves of your Highness's authority to intercept our countrymen, spoil our goods, impress their persons, and even, in some instances, take their lives. The affray at La Ferette—I can vouch for what I saw—had no origin or abettance from us; nevertheless, it is impossible an independent nation can suffer the repetition of such injuries, and free and independent we are

determined to remain, or to die in defence of our rights. What then must follow, unless your Highness listens to the terms which I am commissioned to offer? War—a war to extermination; for so long as one of our confederacy can wield a halbert, so long, if this fatal strife once commences, there will be war betwixt your powerful realms and our poor and barren states. And what can the noble Duke of Burgundy gain by such a strife?—is it wealth and plunder? Alas, my Lord, there is more gold and silver on the very bridle-bits of your Highness's household troops, than can be found in the public treasures or private hoards of our whole confederacy. Is it fame and glory you aspire to? There is little honour to be won by a numerous army over a few scattered bands, by men clad in mail over half-armed husbandmen and shepherds—of such conquest small were the glory. But if, as all Christian men believe, and as it is the constant trust of my countrymen, from memory of the times of our fathers,—if the Lord of Hosts should cast the balance in behalf of the fewer numbers and worse-armed party, I leave

it with your Highness to judge, what would, in that event, be the diminution of worship and fame. Is it extent of vassalage and dominion your Highness desires, by warring with your mountain neighbours? Know that you may, if it be God's will, gain our barren and rugged mountains; but, like our ancestors of old, we will seek refuge in wilder and more distant solitudes, and when we have resisted to the last, we will starve in the icy wastes of the Glaciers. Ay, men, women, and children, we will be frozen into annihilation together, ere one free Switzer will acknowledge a foreign master."

The speech of the Landamman made an obvious impression on the assembly. The Duke observed it, and his hereditary obstinacy was irritated by the general disposition which he saw entertained in favour of the ambassador. This evil principle overcame some impression which the address of the noble Biederman had not failed to make upon him. He answered with a lowering brow, interrupting the old man as he was about to continue his speech,—"You argue falsely, Sir Count, or Sir Landamman, or by

whatever name you call yourself, if you think we war on you from any hope of spoil, or any desire of glory. We know as well as you can tell us, that there is neither profit nor fame to be achieved by conquering you. But sovereigns, to whom Heaven has given the power, must root out a band of robbers, though there is dishonour in measuring swords with them; and we hunt to death a herd of wolves, though their flesh is carrion, and their skins are nought."

The Landamman shook his grey head, and replied, without testifying emotion, and even with something approaching to a smile,—" I am an older woodsman than you, my Lord Duke—and, it may be, a more experienced one. The boldest, the hardiest hunter, will not safely drive the wolf to his den. I have shown your Highness the poor chance of gain, and the great risk of loss, which even you, powerful as you are, must incur by risking a war with determined and desperate men. Let me now tell what we are willing to do to secure a sincere and lasting peace with our powerful

neighbour of Burgundy. Your Grace is in the act of engrossing Lorraine, and it seems probable, under so vigorous and enterprising a Prince, your authority may be extended to the shores of the Mediterranean—be our noble friend and sincere ally, and our mountains, defended by warriors familiar with victory, will be your barriers against Germany and Italy. For your sake we will admit the Count of Savoy to terms, and restore to him our conquests, on such conditions as your Highness shall yourself judge reasonable. Of past subjects of offence on the part of your lieutenants and governors upon the frontier, we will be silent, so we have assurance of no such aggressions in future. Nay, more, and it is my last and proudest offer, we will send three thousand of our youth to assist your Highness in any war which you may engage in, whether against Louis of France, or the Emperor of Germany. They are a different set of men—proudly and truly may I state it—from the scum of Germany and Italy, who form themselves into mercenary bands of soldiers. And, if Heaven

should decide your Highness to accept our offer, there will be one corps in your army which will leave their carcasses on the field ere a man of them break their plighted troth."

A swarthy, but tall and handsome man, wearing a corslet richly engraved with arabesque work, started from his seat with the air of one provoked beyond the bounds of restraint. This was the Count de Campo-basso, commander of Charles's Italian mercenaries, who possessed, as has been alluded to, much influence over the Duke's mind, chiefly obtained by accommodating himself to his master's opinions and prejudices, and placing before the Duke specious arguments to justify him for following his own way.

"This lofty presence must excuse me," he said, "if I speak in defence of my honour, and those of my bold lances, who have followed my fortunes from Italy to serve the bravest Prince in Christendom. I might, indeed, pass over without resentment the outrageous language of this grey-haired churl, whose words cannot affect a knight and a nobleman more than the yell-

ing of a peasant's mastiff. But when I hear him propose to associate his bands of mutinous misgoverned ruffians, with your Highness's troops, I must let him know that there is not a horse-boy in my ranks who would fight in such fellowship. No, even I myself, bound by a thousand ties of gratitude, could not submit to strive abreast with such comrades. I would fold up my banners, and lead five thousand men to seek,—not a nobler master, for the world has none such,—but wars in which we might not be obliged to blush for our assistants."

"Silence, Campo-basso," said the Duke, "and be assured you serve a prince who knows your worth too well to exchange it for the untried and untrustful services of those, whom we have only known as vexatious and malignant neighbours."

Then addressing himself to Arnold Beiderman, he said coldly and sternly, "Sir Landamman, we have heard you fairly. We have heard you, although you come before us with hands died deep in the blood of our servant, Sir Archibald de Hagenbach; for, supposing he was

murdered by a villainous association,—which, by Saint George, shall never, while we live and reign, raise its pestilential head on this side of the Rhine,—yet it is not the less undeniable and undenied, that you stood by in arms, and encouraged the deed the assassins performed under your countenance. Return to your mountains, and be thankful that you return in life. Tell those who sent you that I will be presently on their frontiers. A deputation of your most notable persons, who meet me with halters round their necks, torches in their left hands, in their right their swords held by the point, may learn on what conditions we will grant you peace."

"Then farewell peace, and welcome war!" said the Landamman; "and be its plagues and curses on the heads of those who choose blood and strife rather than peace and union. We will meet you on our frontiers with our naked swords, but the hilts, not their points, shall be in our grasp. Charles of Burgundy, Flanders, and Lorraine, Duke of seven dukedoms, Count of seventeen earldoms, I bid you defiance; and declare war against you in the

name of the confederated Cantons, and such others as shall adhere to them. There," he said, "are my letters of defiance."

The herald took from Arnold Biederman the fatal denunciation.

"Read it not, Toison d'Or!" said the haughty Duke. "Let the executioner drag it through the streets at his horse's tail, and nail it to the gibbet, to show in what account we hold the paltry scroll, and those who sent it.—Away, sirs," speaking to the Swiss, "trudge back to your wildernesses with such haste as your feet can use. When we next meet, you shall better know whom you have offended.—Get our horse ready—the council is broken up."

The Maire of Dijon, when all were in motion to leave the hall, again approached the Duke, and timidly expressed some hopes that his Highness would deign to partake of a banquet which the magistracy had prepared, in expectation he might do them such an honour.

"No, by Saint George of Burgundy, Sir Maire," said Charles, with one of the withering glances, by which he was wont to express in-

dignation mixed with contempt,—"you have not pleased us so well with our breakfast as to induce us to trust our dinner to the loyalty of our good town of Dijon."

So saying, he rudely turned off from the mortified chief magistrate, and, mounting his horse, rode back to his camp, conversing earnestly on the way with the Count of Campobasso.

"I would offer you dinner, my Lord of Oxford," said Colville to that nobleman, when he alighted at his tent, "but I foresee, ere you could swallow a mouthful, you will be summoned to the Duke's presence; for it is our Charles's way, when he has fixed on a wrong course, to wrangle with his friends and counsellors, in order to prove it is a right one. Marry, he always makes a convert of yon supple Italian."

Colvin's augury was speedily realized; for a page almost immediately summoned the English merchant, Philipson, to attend the Duke. Without waiting an instant, Charles poured forth an incoherent tide of reproaches against the Estates of his dukedom, for refusing him their

countenance in so slight a matter, and launched out in explanations of the necessity which he alleged there was for punishing the audacity of the Swiss. "And thou, too, Oxford," he concluded, "art such an impatient fool as to wish me to engage in a distant war with England, and transport forces over the sea, when I have such insolent mutineers to chastise on my own frontiers?"

When he was at length silent, the English Earl laid before him, with respectful earnestness, the danger that appeared to be involved in engaging with a people, poor indeed, but universally dreaded, from their discipline and courage, and that under the eye of so dangerous a rival as Louis of France, who was sure to support the Duke's enemies under hand, if he did not join them openly. On this point the Duke's resolution was immovable. "It shall never," he said, "be told of me, that I uttered threats which I dared not execute. These boors have declared war against me, and they shall learn whose wrath it is that they have wantonly provoked; but I do not, therefore, renounce thy

scheme, my good Oxford. If thou canst procure me this same cession of Provence, and induce old Rene to give up the cause of his grandson, Ferrand of Vaudemont, in Lorraine, thou wilt make it well worth my while to send thee brave aid against my brother Blackburn, who, while he is drinking healths pottle-deep in France, may well come to lose his lands in England. And be not impatient because I cannot at this very instant send men across the seas. The march which I am making towards Neufchatel, which is, I think, the nearest point where I shall find these churls, will be but like a morning's excursion. I trust you will go with us, old companion. I should like to see if you have forgotten, among yonder mountains, how to back a horse and lay a lance in rest."

"I will wait on your Highness," said the Earl, "as is my duty, for my motions must depend on your pleasure. But I will not carry arms, especially against those people of Helvetia, from whom I have experienced hospitality unless it be for my own personal defence."

"Well," replied the Duke, "e'en be it so;

"we shall have in you an excellent judge, to tell us who best discharges his devoir against the mountain clowns."

At this point in the conversation there was a knocking at the entrance of the pavilion, and the Chancellor of Burgundy presently entered, in great haste and anxiety. "News, my Lord —news of France and England," said the prelate, and then observing the presence of a stranger, he looked at the Duke, and was silent.

"It is a faithful friend, my Lord Bishop," said the Duke; "you may tell your news before him."

"It will soon be generally known," said the chancellor—"Louis and Edward are fully accorded." Both the Duke and the English Earl started.

"I expected this," said the Duke, "but not so soon."

"The Kings have met," answered his minister.

"How—in battle?" said Oxford, forgetting himself in his extreme eagerness.

The chancellor was somewhat surprised, but as the Duke seemed to expect him to give an answer, he replied, "No, Sir Stranger—not in battle, but upon appointment, and in peace and amity."

"The sight must have been worth seeing," said the Duke; "when the old fox Louis, and my brother Black—I mean my brother Edward—met. Where held they their rendezvous?"

"On a bridge over the Seine, at Picquigny."

"I would thou hadst been there," said the Duke, looking to Oxford, "with a good axe in thy hand, to strike one fair blow for England, and another for Burgundy. My grandfather was treacherously slain at just such a meeting, at the Bridge of Montereau, upon the Yonne."

"To prevent a similar chance," said the chancellor, "a strong barricade, such as closes the cages in which men keep wild beasts, was raised in the midst of the bridge, and prevented the possibility of their even touching each other's hands."

"Ha, ha! By Saint George, that smells of Louis's craft and caution; for the Englishman, to give him his due, is as little acquainted with fear as with policy. But what terms have they made? Where do the English army winter? What towns, fortresses, and castles, are surrendered to them, in pledge, or in perpetuity?"

"None, my liege," said the chancellor. "The English army returns into England, as fast as shipping can be procured to transport them; and Louis will accommodate them with every sail and oar in his dominions, rather than they should not instantly evacuate France."

"And by what concessions has Louis bought a peace so necessary to his affairs?"

"By fair words," said the chancellor, "by liberal presents, and by some five hundred tuns of wine."

"Wine!" exclaimed the Duke—"Heardst thou ever the like, Signior Philipson? Why, your countrymen are little better than Esau, who sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage. Marry, I must confess I never saw an Englishman who loved a dry-lipped bargain."

"I can scarce believe this news," said the Earl of Oxford. "If this Edward were content to cross the sea with fifty thousand Englishmen merely to return again, there are in his camp both proud nobles and haughty commons enough to resist his disgraceful purpose."

"The money of Louis," said the statesman, "has found noble hands willing to clutch it. The wine of France has flooded every throat in the English army—the riot and uproar was unbounded—and at one time the town of Amiens, where Louis himself resided, was full of so many English archers, all of them intoxicated, that the person of the King of France was almost in their hands. Their sense of national honour has been lost in the universal revel, and those amongst them who would be more dignified and play the wise politicians say, that having come to France by connivance of the Duke of Burgundy, and that prince having failed to join them with his forces, they have done well, wisely, and gallantly, considering the season of the year, and the impossibility of obtaining quarters, to take

tribute of France, and return home in triumph."

"And leave Louis," said Oxford, "at undisturbed freedom to attack Burgundy with all his forces?"

"Not so, friend Philipson," said Duke Charles; "know, that there is a truce betwixt Burgundy and France for the space of seven years, and had not this been granted and signed, it is probable that we might have found some means of marring the treaty betwixt Edward and Louis, even at the expense of affording those voracious islanders beef and beer during the winter months.—Sir Chancellor, you may leave us, but be within reach of a hasty summons."

When his minister left the pavilion, the Duke, who, with his rude and imperious character united much kindness, if it could not be termed generosity of disposition, came up to the Lancastrian lord, who stood like one at whose feet a thunderbolt has just broken, and who is still appalled by the terrors of the shock.

"My poor Oxford," he said, "thou art stu-

pified by this news, which thou canst not doubt must have a fatal effect on the plan which thy brave bosom cherishes with such devoted fidelity. I would for thy sake I could have detained the English a little longer in France; but had I attempted to do so, there were an end of my truce with Louis, and of course to my power to chastise these paltry Cantons, or send forth an expedition to England. As matters stand, give me but a week to punish these mountaineers, and you shall have a larger force than your modesty has requested of me for your enterprise; and, in the meanwhile, I will take care that Blackburn and his cousin-archers have no assistance of shipping from Flanders. Tush, man, never fear it—thou wilt be in England long ere they; and, once more, rely on my assistance—always, thou knowest, the cession of Provence being executed, as in reason. Our cousin Margaret's diamonds we must keep for a time; and perhaps they may pass as a pledge, with some of our own, for the godly purpose of setting at freedom the imprisoned angels of our Flemish usurers, who will not lend even to their

sovereign, unless on good current security. To such straits has the disobedient avarice of our estates for the moment reduced us."

"Alas! my Lord," said the dejected nobleman, "I were ungrateful to doubt the sincerity of your good intentions. But who can presume on the events of war, especially when time presses for instant decision? You are pleased to trust me. Let your Highness extend your confidence thus far: I will take my horse, and ride after the Landamman, if he hath already set forth. I have little doubt to make such an accommodation with him that you may be secure on all your south-eastern frontiers. You may then with security work your will in Lorraine and Provence."

"Do not speak of it," said the Duke sharply; "thou forget'st thyself and me, when thou supposest that a prince, who has pledged his word to his people, can recall it like a merchant chaffering for his paltry wares. Go to—we will assist you, but we will be ourselves judge of the time and manner. Yet, having both kind will to our distressed cousin of Anjou, and being

your good friend, we will not linger in the matter. Our host have orders to break up this evening and direct their march against Neufchatel, where these proud Swiss shall have a taste of the fire and sword which they have provoked."

Oxford sighed deeply, but made no farther remonstrance; in which he acted wisely, since it was likely to have exasperated the fiery temper of the sovereign to whom it was addressed, while it was certain that it would not in the slightest degree alter his resolution.

He took farewell of the Duke, and returned to Colvin, whom he found immersed in the business of his department, and preparing for the removal of the artillery, an operation which the clumsiness of the ordnance, and the execrable state of the roads, rendered at that time a much more troublesome operation than at present, though it is even still one of the most laborious movements attending the march of an army. The Master of the Ordnance welcomed Oxford with much glee, and congratulated himself on the distinguished honour of enjoying his company during the campaign, and acquainted him,

that, by the especial command of the Duke, he had made fitting preparations for his accommodation, suitable to the disguised character which he meant to maintain, but in every other respect as convenient as a camp could admit of.

CHAPTER VI.

A mirthful man he was—the snows of age
Fell, but they did not chill him. Gaiety,
Even in life's closing, touch'd his teeming brain
With such wild visions as the setting sun
Raises in front of some hoar glacier,
Painting the bleak ice with a thousand hues.

Old Play.

Leaving the Earl of Oxford in attendance on the stubborn Duke of Burgundy during an expedition, which the one represented as a brief excursion, more resembling a hunting party than a campaign, and which the other considered in a much graver and more perilous light, we return to Arthur de Vere, or the younger Philipson, as he continued to be called, who was conducted by his guide with fidelity and success, but certainly very slowly, upon his journey into Provence.

The state of Lorraine, overrun by the Duke of Burgundy's army, and infested at the same time by different scattered bands, who took the field, or held out the castles, as they alleged, for the interest of Count Ferrand de Vaudemont, rendered journeying so dangerous, that it was often necessary to leave the main road, and to take circuitous tracks, in order to avoid such unfriendly encounters as travellers might otherwise have met with.

Arthur, taught by sad experience to distrust strange guides, found himself, nevertheless, in this eventful and perilous journey, disposed to rest considerable confidence in his present conductor, Thiebault, a Provençal by birth, intimately acquainted with the roads which they took, and, as far as he could judge, disposed to discharge his office with fidelity. Prudence alike, and the habits which he had acquired in travelling, as well as the character of a merchant, which he still sustained, induced him to waive the *morgue*, or haughty superiority of a knight and noble towards an inferior personage, espe-

cially as he rightly conjectured that free intercourse with this man, whose acquirements seemed of a superior cast, was likely to render him a judge of his opinions and disposition towards him. In return for his condescension, he obtained a good deal of information concerning the province which he was approaching.

As they drew near the boundaries of Provence, the communications of Thiebault became more fluent and interesting. He could not only tell the name and history of each romantic castle which they passed, in their devious and doubtful route, but had at his command the chivalrous history of the noble knights and barons to whom they now pertained, or had belonged in earlier days, and could recount their exploits against the Saracens, by repelling their attacks upon Christendom, or their efforts to recover the Holy Sepulchre from Pagan hands. In the course of such narrations, Thiebault was led to speak of the Troubadours, a race of native poets of Provençal origin, differing widely from the minstrels of Normandy, and the adjacent pro-

vinces of France, with whose tales of chivalry, as well as the numerous translations of their works into Norman-French and English, Arthur, like most of the noble youth of his country, was intimately acquainted and deeply embued. Thiebault boasted that his grandsire, of humble birth indeed, but of distinguished talent, was one of this gifted race, whose compositions produced so great an effect on the temper and manners of their age and country. It was, however, to be regretted, that inculcating as the prime duty of life a fantastic spirit of gallantry, which sometimes crossed the Platonic bound prescribed to it, the poetry of the Troubadours was too frequently used to soften and seduce the heart, and corrupt the principles.

Arthur's attention was called to this peculiarity, by Thiebault singing, which he could do with good skill, the history of a Troubadour, named William Cabestainy, who loved, *par amours*, a noble and beautiful lady, Margaret, the wife of a baron called Raymond de Roussillon. The jealous husband obtained proof of his dishonour, and having put Cabestainy to death

by assassination, he took his heart from his bosom, and causing it to be dressed like that of an animal, ordered it to be served up to his lady; and when she had eaten of the horrible mess, told her of what her banquet was composed. The lady replied, that since she had been made to partake of food so precious, no coarser morsel should ever after cross her lips. She persisted in her resolution, and thus starved herself to death. The Troubadour who celebrated this tragic history, had displayed in his composition a good deal of poetic art, glossing over the error of the lovers as the fault of their destiny, dwelling on their tragical fate with considerable pathos, and finally, execrating the blind fury of the husband, with the full fervour of poetical indignation, he recorded, with vindictive pleasure, how every bold knight and true lover in the south of France assembled to besiege the baron's castle, stormed it by main force, left not one stone upon another, and put the tyrant himself to an ignominious death. Arthur was interested in the melancholy tale,

which even beguiled him of a few tears; but as he thought farther on its purport, he dried his eyes, and said, with some sternness,—"Thiebault, sing me no more such lays. I have heard my father say, that the readiest mode to corrupt a Christian man, is to bestow upon vice the pity and the praise which are due only to virtue. Your Baron of Roussillon is a monster of cruelty; but your unfortunate lovers were not the less guilty. It is by giving fair names to foul actions, that those who would start at real vice are led to practise its lessons, under the disguise of virtue."

"I would you knew, Seignor," answered Thiebault, "that this Lay of Cabestainy, and the Lady Margaret of Roussillon, is reckoned a masterpiece of the joyous science. Fie, sir, you are too young to be so strict a censor of morals. What will you do when your head is grey, if you are thus severe when it is scarcely brown?"

"A head which listens to folly in youth, will hardly be honourable in old age," answered Arthur.

Thiebault had no mind to carry the dispute farther.

"It is not for me to contend with your worship. I only think, with every true son of chivalry and song, that a knight without a mistress is like a sky without a star."

"Do I not know that?" answered Arthur; "but yet better remain in darkness than be guided by such false lights as shower down vice and pestilence."

"Nay, it may be your seignorie is right," answered the guide. "It is certain, that even in Provence here we have lost much of our keen judgment on matters of love,—its difficulties, its intricacies, and its errors, since the Troubadours are no longer regarded as usual, and since the High and Noble Parliament of Love has ceased to hold its sittings.

"But in these latter days," continued the Provençal, "kings, dukes, and sovereigns, instead of being the foremost and most faithful vassals of the Court of Cupid, are themselves the slaves of selfishness, and love of gain. Instead of winning hearts by breaking lances

in the lists, they are breaking the hearts of their impoverished vassals by the most cruel exactions—instead of attempting to deserve the smile and favours of their lady-loves, they are meditating how to steal castles, towns, and provinces from their neighbours. But long life to the good and venerable King René! While he has an acre of land left, his residence will be the resort of valiant knights, whose only aim is praise in arms, of true lovers, who are persecuted by fortune, and of high-toned harpers, who know how to celebrate faith and valour."

Arthur, interested in learning something more precise than common fame had taught him on the subject of this prince, easily induced the talkative Provençal to enlarge upon the virtues of his old sovereign's character, as just, joyous, and debonair, a friend to the most noble exercises of the chase and the tilt-yard, and still more so to the joyous science of Poetry and Music; who gave away more revenue than he received, in largesses to knights errant and itinerant musicians, with whom his petty court was

crowded, as one of the very few in which the ancient hospitality was still maintained.

Such was the picture which Thiebault drew of the last minstrel monarch; and though the eulogium was exaggerated, perhaps the facts were not overcharged.

Born of royal parentage, and with high pretensions, René had at no period of his life been able to match his fortunes to his claims. Of the kingdoms to which he asserted right, nothing remained in his possession but the county of Provence itself, a fair and friendly principality, but diminished by the many claims which France had acquired upon portions of it by advances of money to supply the personal expenses of its master, and by other portions, which Burgundy, to whom René had been a prisoner, held in pledge for his ransom. In his youth he engaged in more than one military enterprise, in the hope of attaining some part of the territory of which he was styled sovereign. His courage is not impeached, but fortune did not smile on his military adventures; and he seems at last to have become sensible, that the power

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of admiring and celebrating warlike merit, is very different from possessing that quality. In fact, René was a prince of very moderate parts, endowed with a love of the fine arts, which he carried to extremity, and a degree of good-humour, which never permitted him to repine at fortune, but rendered its possessor happy, when a prince of keener feelings would have died of despair. This insouciant, light-tempered, gay, and thoughtless disposition, conducted René, free from all the passions which embitter life, and often shorten it, to a hale and mirthful old age. Even domestic losses, which often affect those who are proof against mere reverses of fortune, made no deep impression on the feelings of this cheerful old monarch. Most of his children had died young; René took it not to heart. His daughter Margaret's marriage with the powerful Henry of England was considered a connexion much above the fortunes of the King of the Troubadours. But in the issue, instead of René deriving any splendour from the match, he was involved in the misfortunes of his daughter, and repeatedly obliged to impoverish

himself to supply her ransom. Perhaps in his private soul the old king did not think these losses so mortifying, as the necessity of receiving Margaret into his court and family. On fire when reflecting on the losses she had sustained, mourning over friends slain and kingdoms lost, the proudest and most passionate of princesses was ill suited to dwell with the gayest and best-humoured of sovereigns, whose pursuits she contemned, and whose lightness of temper, for finding comfort in such trifles, she could not forgive. The discomfort attached to her presence, and vindictive recollections, embarrassed the good-humoured old monarch, though it was unable to drive him beyond his equanimity.

Another distress pressed him more sorely.—Yolande, a daughter of his first wife, Isabella, had succeeded to his claims upon the Duchy of Lorraine, and transmitted them to her son, Ferrand, Count of Vaudemont, a young man of courage and spirit, engaged at this time in the apparently desperate undertaking of making his title good against the Duke of Burgundy, who, with little right, but great power, was seizing

upon and overrunning this rich Duchy, which he laid claim to as a male fief. And to conclude, while the aged king on one side beheld his dethroned daughter in hopeless despair, and on the other his disinherited grandson, in vain attempting to recover a part of their rights, he had the additional misfortune to know, that his nephew, Louis of France, and his cousin, the Duke of Burgundy, were secretly contending which should succeed him in that portion of Provence which he still continued to possess, and that it was only jealousy of each other which prevented his being despoiled of this last remnant of his territory. Yet amid all this distress, René feasted and received guests, danced, sung, composed poetry, used the pencil or brush with no small skill, devised and conducted festivals and processions, and studying to promote, as far as possible, the immediate mirth and good-humour of his subjects, if he could not materially enlarge their more permanent prosperity, was never mentioned by them, excepting as *Le bon Roi René*, a distinction conferred on him down to the present day, and due to him certainly by

the qualities of his heart, if not by those of his head.

Whilst Arthur was receiving from his guide a full account of the peculiarities of King René, they entered the territories of that merry monarch. It was late in the autumn, and about the period when the south-eastern counties of France rather show to least advantage. The foliage of the olive-tree is then decayed and withered, and as it predominates in the landscape, and resembles the scorched complexion of the soil itself, an ashen and arid hue is given to the whole. Still, however, there were scenes in the hilly and pastoral parts of the country, where the quantity of evergreens relieved the eye even in this dead season.

The appearance of the country, in general, had much in it that was peculiar.

The travellers perceived at every turn some marks of the King's singular character. Provence, as the part of Gaul which first received Roman civilisation, and as having been still longer the residence of the Grecian colony who founded Marseilles, is more full of the splendid

relics of ancient architecture than any other country in Europe, Italy and Greece excepted. The good taste of King René had dictated some attempts to clear out and to restore these memorials of antiquity. Was there a triumphal arch, or an ancient temple—huts and hovels were cleared away from its vicinity, and means were used at least to retard the approach of ruin. Was there a marble fountain, which superstition had dedicated to some sequestered naiad—it was surrounded by olives, almond, and orange trees—its cistern was repaired, and taught once more to retain its crystal treasures. The huge amphitheatres, and gigantic colonnades, experienced the same anxious care, attesting that the noblest specimens of the fine arts found one admirer and preserver in King René, even during the course of those which are termed the dark and barbarous ages.

A change of manners could also be observed in passing from Burgundy and Lorraine, where society relished of German bluntness, into the pastoral country of Provence, where the influence of a fine climate and melodious language,

joined to the pursuits of the romantic old monarch, with the universal taste for music and poetry, had introduced a civilisation of manners, which approached to affectation. The shepherd literally marched abroad in the morning, piping his flocks forth to the pasture, with some love sonnet, the composition of an amorous Troubadour; and his "fleecy care" seemed actually to be under the influence of his music, instead of being ungraciously insensible to its melody, as is the case in colder climates. Arthur observed, too, that the Provençal sheep, instead of being driven before the shepherd, regularly followed him, and did not disperse to feed, until the swain, by turning his face round to them, remaining stationary, and executing variations on the air which he was playing, seemed to remind them that it was proper to do so. While in motion, his huge dog, of a species which is trained to face the wolf, and who is respected by the sheep as their guardian, and not feared as their tyrant, followed his master with his ears pricked, like the chief critic and prime

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judge of the performance, at some tones of which he seldom failed to intimate disapprobation; while the flock, like the generality of an audience, followed in unanimous though silent applause. At the hour of noon, the shepherd had sometimes acquired an augmentation to his audience, in some comely matron or blooming maiden, with whom he had rendezvoused by such a fountain as we have described, and who listened to the husband's or lover's chalumeau, or mingled her voice with his in the duets, of which the songs of the Troubadours have left so many examples. In the cool of the evening, the dance on the village green, or the concert before the hamlet door; the little repast of fruits, cheese, and bread, which the traveller was readily invited to share, gave new charms to the illusion, and seemed in earnest to point out Provence as the Arcadia of France.

But the greatest singularity was, in the eyes of Arthur, the total absence of armed men and soldiers in this peaceful country. In England, no man stirred without his long bow,

sword, and buckler. In France, the hind wore armour even when he was betwixt the stilts of his plough. In Germany, you could not look along a mile of highway, but the eye was encountered by clouds of dust, out of which were seen, by fits, waving feathers and flashing armour. Even in Switzerland, the peasant, if he had a journey to make, though but of a mile or two, cared not to travel without his halbert and two-handed sword. But in Provence all seemed quiet and peaceful, as if the music of the land had lulled to sleep all its wrathful passions. Now and then a mounted cavalier might pass them, the harp at whose saddle-bow, or carried by one of his attendants, attested the character of a Troubadour, which was affected by men of all ranks; and then only a short sword on his left thigh, borne for show rather than use, was a necessary and appropriate part of his equipment.

"Peace," said Arthur, as he looked around him, "is an inestimable jewel; but it will be soon snatched from those who are not prepared with heart and hand to defend it."

The sight of the ancient and interesting town of Aix, where King René held his court, dispelled reflections of a general character, and recalled to the young Englishman the peculiar mission on which he was engaged.

He then required to know from the Provençal Thiebault, whether his instructions were to leave him, now that he had successfully attained the end of his journey.

"My instructions," answered Thiebault, "are to remain in Aix while there is any chance of your seignorie's continuing there, to be of such use to you as you may require, either as a guide or an attendant, and to keep these men in readiness to wait upon you when you have occasion for messengers or guards. With your approbation, I will see them disposed of in fitting quarters, and receive my farther instructions from your seignorie wherever you please to appoint me. I propose this separation, because I understand it is your present pleasure to be private."

"I must go to court," answered Arthur, "without any delay. Wait for me in half an

hour by that fountain in the street, which projects into the air such a magnificent pillar of water, surrounded, I would almost swear, by a vapour like steam, serving as a shroud to the jet which it envelopes."

"The jet is so surrounded," answered the Provençal, "because it is supplied by a hot spring rising from the bowels of the earth, and the touch of frost on this autumn morning makes the vapour more distinguishable than usual.—But if it is good King René whom you seek, you will find him at this time walking in his chimney. Do not be afraid of approaching him, for there never was a monarch so easy of access, especially to good-looking strangers like you, seignorie."

"But his ushers," said Arthur, "will not admit me into his hall."

"His hall!" repeated Thiebault—"Whose hall?"

"Why, King René's, I apprehend. If he is walking in a chimney, it can only be in that of his hall, and a stately one it must be to give him room for such exercise."

"You mistake my meaning," said the guide, laughing.—"What we call King René's chimney is the narrow parapet yonder; it extends between these two towers, has an exposure to the south, and is sheltered in every other direction. Yonder it is his pleasure to walk and enjoy the beams of the sun, on such cool mornings as the present. It nurses, he says, his poetical vein. If you approach his promenade he will readily speak to you, unless, indeed, he is in the very act of a poetical composition."

Arthur could not forbear smiling at the thoughts of a king, eighty years of age, broken down with misfortunes and beset with dangers, who yet amused himself with walking in an open parapet, and composing poetry in presence of all such of his loving subjects as chose to look on.

"If you will walk a few steps this way," said Thiebault, "you may see the good King, and judge whether or not you will accost him at present. I will dispose of the people, and await your orders at the fountain in the Corso."

Arthur saw no objection to the proposal of his guide, and was not unwilling to have an opportunity of seeing something of the good King René, before he was introduced to his presence.

CHAPTER VII.

Ay, this is he who wears the wreath of bays
Wove by Apollo and the Sisters Nine,
Which Jove's dread lightning scathes not. He hath doft
The cumbrous helm of steel, and flung aside
The yet more galling diadem of gold;
While, with a leafy circlet round his brows,
He reigns the King of Lovers and of Poets.

A CAUTIOUS approach to the chimney, that is, the favourite walk of the King, who is described by Shakspeare as bearing

——— the style of King of Naples,
Of both the Sicilies, and Jerusalem,
Yet not so wealthy as an English yeoman,

gave Arthur the perfect survey of his Majesty in person. He saw an old man, with locks and beard, which, in amplitude and whiteness, nearly rivalled those of the envoy from Schwitz, but with a fresh and ruddy colour in his cheek,

and an eye of great vivacity. His dress was showy to a degree almost inconsistent with his years; and his step, not only firm but full of alertness and vivacity, while occupied in traversing the short and sheltered walk, which he had chosen, rather for comfort than for privacy, showed juvenile vigour, still animating an aged frame. The old King carried his tablets, and a pencil, in his hand, seeming totally abstracted in his own thoughts, and indifferent to being observed by several persons from the public street beneath his elevated promenade.

Of these, some, from their dress and manner, seemed themselves Troubadours; for they held in their hands rebecks, rotes, small portable harps, and other indications of their profession. Such appeared to be stationary, as if engaged in observing, and recording their remarks on the meditations of their Prince. Other passengers, bent on their own more serious affairs, looked up to the King as to some one whom they were accustomed to see daily, but never passed without doffing their bonnets, and expressing, by a suitable obeisance, a re-

spect and affection towards his person, which appeared to make up in cordiality of feeling what it wanted in deep and solemn deference.

René, in the meanwhile, was apparently unconscious both of the gaze of such as stood still, or the greeting of those who passed on, his mind seeming altogether engrossed with the apparent labour of some arduous task in poetry or music. He walked fast or slow as best suited the progress of composition. At times he stopped to mark hastily down on his tablets something which seemed to occur to him as deserving of preservation; at other times he dashed out what he had written, and flung down the pencil as if in a sort of despair. On these occasions, the Sibylline leaf was carefully picked up by a beautiful page, his only attendant, who reverently observed the first suitable opportunity of restoring it again to his royal hand. The same youth bore a viol, on which, at a signal from his master, he occasionally struck a few musical notes, to which the old King listened, now with a soothed and satisfied air, now with a discontented and anxious brow. At times, his en-

thusiasm rose so high, that he even hopped and skipped, with an activity which his years did not promise; at other times his motions were extremely slow, and occasionally he stood still, like one wrapped in the deepest and most anxious meditation. When he chanced to look on the group which seemed to watch his motions, and who ventured even to salute him with a murmur of applause, it was only to distinguish them with a friendly and good-humoured nod; a salutation with which, likewise, he failed not to reply to the greeting of the occasional passengers, when his earnest attention to his task, whatever it might be, permitted him to observe them.

At length the Royal eye lighted upon Arthur, whose attitude of silent observation, and the distinction of his figure, pointed him out as a stranger. René beckoned to his page, who, receiving his master's commands in a whisper, descended from the royal chimney, to the broader platform beneath, which was open to general resort. The youth, addressing Arthur with much courtesy, informed him the King desired to speak

with him. The young Englishman had no alternative but that of approaching, though pondering much in his own mind how he ought to comport himself towards such a singular specimen of royalty.

When he drew near, King René addressed him in a tone of courtesy not unmingled with dignity, and Arthur's awe in his immediate presence was greater than he himself could have anticipated from his previous conception of the royal character.

"You are, from your appearance, fair sir," said King René, "a stranger in this country. By what name must we call you, and to what business are we to ascribe the happiness of seeing you at our court?"

Arthur remained a moment silent, and the good old man, imputing it to awe and timidity, proceeded in an encouraging tone.

"Modesty in youth is ever commendable; you are doubtless an acolyte in the noble and joyous science of Minstrelsy and Music, drawn hither by the willing welcome which we afford to the professors of those arts, in which—praise

be to Our Lady and the saints!—we have ourself been deemed a proficient."

"I do not aspire to the honours of a Troubadour," answered Arthur.

"I believe you," answered the King, "for your speech smacks of the northern, or Norman-French, such as is spoken in England and other unrefined nations. But you are a minstrel, perhaps, from these ultramontane parts. Be assured we despise not their efforts; for we have listened, not without pleasure and instruction, to many of their bold and wild romaunts, which, though rude in device and language, and, therefore, far inferior to the regulated poetry of our Troubadours, have yet something in their powerful and rough measure, which occasionally rouses the heart like the sound of a trumpet."

"I have felt the truth of your Grace's observation, when I have heard the songs of my country," said Arthur; "but I have neither skill nor audacity to imitate what I admire—My latest residence qas been in Italy."

"You are perhaps then a proficient in paint-

ing," said René; "an art which applies itself to the eye, as poetry and music do to the ear, and is scarce less in esteem with us. If you are skilful in the art, you have come to a monarch who loves it, and the fair country in which it is practised."

"In simple truth, Sire, I am an Englishman, and my hand has been too much welk'd and hardened by practice of the bow, the lance, and the sword, to touch the harp, or even the pencil."

"An Englishman!" said René, obviously relaxing in the warmth of his welcome; "and what brings you here? England and I have long had little friendship together."

"It is even on that account that I am here," said Arthur. "I come to pay my homage to your Grace's daughter, the Princess Margaret of Anjou, whom I and many true Englishmen regard still as our Queen, though traitors have usurped her title."

"Alas, good youth," said René, "I must grieve for you, while I respect your loyalty and faith. Had my daughter Margaret been of my mind, she had long since abandoned pretensions,

which have drowned in seas of blood the noblest and bravest of her adherents."

The King seemed about to say more, but checked himself.

"Go to my palace," he said; "enquire for the Seneschal Hugh de Saint Cyr, he will give thee the means of seeing Margaret—that is, if it be her will to see thee. If not, good English youth, return to my palace, and thou shalt have hospitable entertainment; for a King who loves minstrelsy, music, and painting, is ever most sensible to the claims of honour, virtue, and loyalty; and I read in thy looks thou art possessed of these qualities, and willingly believe thou mayst, in more quiet times, aspire to share the honours of the joyous science. But if thou hast a heart to be touched by the sense of beauty and fair proportion, it will leap within thee at the first sight of my palace, the stately grace of which may be compared to the faultless form of some high-bred dame, or the artful, yet seemingly simple modulations of such a tune as we have been now composing."

The king seemed disposed to take his instrument, and indulge the youth with a rehearsal of the strain he had just arranged; but Arthur at that moment experienced the painful internal feeling of that peculiar species of shame, which well-constructed minds feel when they see others express a great assumption of importance, with a confidence that they are exciting admiration, when in fact they are only exposing themselves to ridicule. Arthur, in short, took leave, "in very shame," of the King of Naples, both the Sicilies, and Jerusalem, in a manner somewhat more abrupt than ceremony demanded. The king looked after him, with some wonder at this want of breeding, which, however, he imputed to his visitor's insular education, and then again began to twangle his viol.

"The old fool!" said Arthur; "his daughter is dethroned, his dominions crumbling to pieces, his family on the eve of becoming extinct, his grandson driven from one lurking place to another, and expelled from his mother's inheritance,—and he can find amusement in these fopperies! I thought him, with his long white beard,

like Nicolas Bonstetten; but the old Swiss is a Solomon compared with him."

As these and other reflections, highly disparaging to King René, passed through Arthur's mind, he reached the place of rendezvous, and found Thiebault beneath the steaming fountain, forced from one of those hot springs which had been the delight of the Romans from an early period. Thiebault, having assured his master that his retinue, horse and man, were so disposed as to be ready on an instant's call, readily undertook to guide him to King René's palace, which, from its singularity, and indeed its beauty of architecture, deserved the eulogium which the old monarch had bestowed upon it. The front consisted of three towers of Roman architecture, two of them being placed on the angles of the palace, and the third, which served the purpose of a mausoleum, forming a part of the group, though somewhat detached from the other buildings. This last was a structure of beautiful proportions. The lower part of the edifice was square, serving as a sort of pedestal to the upper part, which was circular,

and surrounded by columns of massive granite. The other two towers at the angles of the palace were round, and also ornamented with pillars, and with a double row of windows. In front of, and connected with, these Roman remains, to which a date has been assigned as early as the fifth or sixth century, arose the ancient palace of the Counts of Provence, built a century or two later, but where a rich Gothic or Moorish front contrasted, and yet harmonized, with the more regular and massive architecture of the lords of the world. It is not more than thirty or forty years since this very curious remnant of antique art was destroyed, to make room for new public buildings, which have never yet been erected.

Arthur really experienced some sensation of the kind which the old king had prophesied, and stood looking with wonder at the ever-open gate of the palace, into which men of all kinds seemed to enter freely. After looking around for a few minutes, the young Englishman ascended the steps of a noble portico, and asked of a porter, as old and as lazy as a great man's domestic ought

to be, for the seneschal named to him by the king. The corpulent janitor, with great politeness, put the stranger under the charge of a page, who ushered him to a chamber, in which he found another aged functionary of higher rank, with a comely face, a clear composed eye, and a brow which, having never been knit into gravity, intimated that the seneschal of Aix was a proficient in the philosophy of his royal master. He recognised Arthur the moment he addressed him.

"You speak northern French, fair sir; you have lighter hair and a fairer complexion than the natives of this country—You ask after Queen Margaret—By all these marks I read you English—Her Grace of England is at this moment paying a vow at the monastery of Mont Saint Victoire, and if your name be Arthur Philipson, I have commission to forward you to her presence immediately—that is, as soon as you have tasted of the royal provision."

The young man would have remonstrated, but the seneschal left him no leisure.

"Meat and mass," he said, "never hindered

work—it is perilous to youth to journey too far on an empty stomach—he himself would take a mouthful with the Queen's guest, and pledge him to boot in a flask of old Hermitage."

The board was covered with an alacrity which showed that hospitality was familiarly exercised in King René's dominions. Pasties, dishes of game, the gallant boar's-head, and other delicacies, were placed on the table, and the seneschal played the merry host, frequently apologising (unnecessarily) for showing an indifferent example, as it was his duty to carve before King René, and the good king was never pleased unless he saw him feed lustily as well as carve featly.

"But for you, sir guest, eat freely, since you may not see food again till sunset; for the good Queen takes her misfortunes so to heart that sighs are her food, and her tears a bottle of drink, as the Psalmist hath it. But I bethink me you will need steeds for yourself and your equipage to reach Mont Saint Victoire, which is seven miles from Aix."

Arthur intimated that he had a guide and

horses in attendance, and begged permission to take his adieu. The worthy seneschal, his fair round belly graced with a gold chain, accompanied him to the gate with a step, which a gentle fit of the gout had rendered uncertain, but which, he assured Arthur, would vanish before three days' use of the hot springs. Thiebault appeared before the gate, not with the tired steeds from which they had dismounted an hour since, but with fresh palfreys from the stable of the king.

"They are yours from the moment you have put foot in stirrup," said the seneschal; "the good King René never received back as his property a horse which he had lent to a guest; and that is perhaps one reason why his Highness and we of his household must walk often a-foot."

Here the seneschal exchanged greetings with his young visitor, who rode forth to seek Queen Margaret's place of temporary retirement at the celebrated monastery of Saint Victoire. He demanded of his guide in which direction it lay, who pointed, with an air of triumph, to a moun-

tain three thousand feet and upwards in height, which arose at five or six miles' distance from the town, and which its bold and rocky summit rendered the most distinguished object of the landscape. Thiebault spoke of it with unusual glee and energy, so much so as to lead Arthur to conceive that his trusty squire had not neglected to avail himself of the lavish hospitality of *Le bon Roy René*. Thiebault, however, continued to expatiate on the fame of the mountain and monastery. They derived their name, he said, from a great victory which was gained by a Roman general, named Caio Mario, against two large armies of Saracens with ultramontane names, (the Teutones probably and Cimbri,) in gratitude to Heaven for which victory Caio Mario vowed to build a monastery on the mountain, for the service of the Virgin Mary, in honour of whom he had been baptized. With all the importance of a local connoisseur, Thiebault proceeded to prove his general assertion by specific facts.

"Yonder," he said, "was the camp of the Saracens, from which, when the battle was ap-

parently decided, their wives and women rushed, with horrible screams, dishevelled hair, and the gestures of furies, and for a time prevailed in stopping the flight of the men." He pointed out too the river, for access to which, cut off by the superior generalship of the Romans, the barbarians, whom he called Saracens, hazarded the action, and whose streams they empurpled with their blood. In short, he mentioned many circumstances which showed how accurately tradition will preserve the particulars of ancient events, even whilst forgetting, mistating, and confounding dates, and persons.

Perceiving that Arthur lent him a not unwilling ear,—for it may be supposed that the education of a youth bred up in the heat of civil wars, was not well qualified to criticise his account of the wars of a distant period,—the Provençal, when he had exhausted this topic, drew up close to his master's side, and asked, in a suppressed tone, whether he knew, or was desirous of being made acquainted with, the cause of Margaret's having left Aix, to establish herself in the monastery of Saint Victoire?

"For the accomplishment of a vow," answered Arthur; "all the world knows it."

"All Aix knows the contrary," said Thiebault; "and I can tell you the truth, so I were sure it would not offend your seignorie."

"The truth can offend no reasonable man, so it be expressed in the terms of which Queen Margaret must be spoken in the presence of an Englishman."

Thus replied Arthur, willing to receive what information he could gather, and desirous, at the same time, to check the petulance of his attendant.

"I have nothing," replied his follower, "to state in disparagement of the gracious Queen, whose only misfortune is, that, like her royal father, she has more titles than towns. Besides, I know well that you Englishmen, though you speak wildly of your sovereigns yourselves, will not permit others to fail in respect to them."

"Say on, then," answered Arthur.

"Your seignorie must know, then," said Thiebault, "that the good King René has been much disturbed by the deep melancholy

which afflicted Queen Margaret, and has bent himself with all his power, to change it into a gayer humour. He made entertainments in public and in private; he assembled minstrels and troubadours, whose music and poetry might have drawn smiles from one on his death-bed. The whole country resounded with mirth and glee, and the gracious Queen could not stir abroad in the most private manner, but before she had gone a hundred paces, she lighted on an ambush, consisting of some pretty pageant, or festivous mummery, composed often by the good King himself, which interrupted her solitude, in purpose of relieving her heavy thoughts with some pleasant pastime. But the Queen's deep melancholy rejected all these modes of dispelling it, and at length she confined herself to her own apartments, and absolutely refused to see even her royal father, because he generally brought into her presence those whose productions he thought likely to soothe her sorrow. Indeed she seemed to hear the harpers with loathing, and, excepting one wandering Englishman, who sung a rude and melan-

choly ballad, which threw her into a flood of tears, and to whom she gave a chain of price, she never seemed to look at, or be conscious of the presence of any one. And at length, as I have had the honour to tell your seignorie, she refused to see even her royal father unless he came alone; and that he found no heart to do."

"I wonder not at it," said the young man; "by the White Swan, I am rather surprised his mummery drove her not to frenzy."

"Something like it indeed took place," said Thiebault; "and I will tell your seignorie how it chanced. You must know that good King René, unwilling to abandon his daughter to the foul fiend of melancholy, bethought him of making a grand effort. You must know further, that the King, powerful in all the craft of Troubadours and Jongleurs, is held in peculiar esteem for conducting mysteries, and other of those gamesome and delightful sports and processions, with which our holy church permits her graver ceremonies to be relieved and diversified, to the cheering of the hearts of all true children

of religion. It is admitted that no one has ever been able to approach his excellence in the arrangement of the Fête-Dieu; and the tune to which the devils cudgel King Herod, to the great edification of all Christian spectators, is of our good King's royal composition. He hath danced at Tarasconne in the ballet of Saint Martha and the Dragon, and was accounted in his own person, the only actor competent to present the Tarrasque. His Highness introduced also a new ritual into the consecration of the Boy Bishop, and composed an entire set of grotesque music for the Festival of Asses. In short, his Grace's strength lies in those pleasing and becoming festivities which strew the path of edification with flowers, and send men dancing and singing on their way to Heaven.

"Now the good King René, feeling his own genius for such recreative compositions, resolved to exert it to the utmost, in the hope that he might thereby relieve the melancholy in which his daughter was plunged; and which infected all that approached her. It chanced, some short time since, that the Queen was ab-

sent for certain days, I know not where or on what business, but it gave the good King time to make his preparations. So when his daughter returned, he with much importunity prevailed on her to make part of a religious procession to Saint Sauveur, the principal church in Aix. The Queen, innocent of what was intended, decked herself with solemnity, to witness and partake of what she expected would prove a work of grave piety. But no sooner had she appeared on the esplanade in front of the palace, than more than an hundred masks, dressed up like Turks, Jews, Saracens, Moors, and I know not whom besides, crowded around, to offer her their homage, in the character of the Queen of Sheba; and a grotesque piece of music called them to arrange themselves for a ludicrous ballet, in which they addressed the Queen in the most entertaining manner, and with the most extravagant gestures. The Queen, stunned with the noise, and affronted with the petulance of this unexpected onset, would have gone back into the palace; but the doors had been shut by the King's order so soon as she set

forth; and her retreat in that direction was cut off. Finding herself excluded from the palace, the Queen advanced to the front of the façade, and endeavoured by signs and words to appease the hubbub, but the maskers, who had their instructions, only answered with songs, music, and shouts."

"I would," said Arthur, "there had been a score of English yeomen in presence, with their quarter-staves, to teach the bawling villains respect for one that has worn the crown of England!"

"All the noise that was made before was silence and soft music," continued Thiebault, "till that when the good King himself appeared, grotesquely dressed in the character of King Solomon"——

"To whom, of all princes, he has the least resemblance," said Arthur——

"With such capers and gesticulations of welcome to the Queen of Sheba, as, I am assured by those who saw it, would have brought a dead man alive again, or killed a living man with laughing. Among other properties, he had

in his hand a truncheon, somewhat formed like a fool's bauble"——

"A most fit sceptre for such a sovereign," said Arthur——

"Which was headed," continued Thiebault, "by a model of the Jewish Temple, finely gilded and curiously cut in pasteboard. He managed this with the utmost grace, and delighted every spectator by his gaiety and activity, excepting the Queen, who, the more he skipped and capered, seemed to be the more incensed, until, on his approaching her to conduct her to the procession, she seemed roused to a sort of frenzy, struck the truncheon out of his hand, and breaking through the crowd, who felt as if a tigress had leapt amongst them from a showman's cart, rushed into the royal court-yard. Ere the order of the scenic representation, which her violence had interrupted, could be restored, the Queen again issued forth, mounted and attended by two or three English cavaliers of her Majesty's suite. She forced her way through the crowd, without regarding either their safety or her own, flew like a hail-storm along the streets, and

never drew bridle till she was as far up this same Mont Saint Victoire as the road would permit. She was then received into the convent and has since remained there; and a vow of penance is the pretext to cover over the quarrel betwixt her and her father."

"How long may it be," said Arthur, "since these things chanced?"

"It is but three days since Queen Margaret left Aix in the manner I have told you.—But we are come as far up the mountain as men usually ride. See, yonder is the monastery rising betwixt two huge rocks, which form the very top of Mont Saint Victoire. There is no more open ground than is afforded by the cleft, into which the convent of Saint Mary of Victory is, as it were, niched; and the access is guarded by the most dangerous precipices. To ascend the mountain, you must keep that narrow path, which, winding and turning among the cliffs, leads at length to the summit of the hill, and the gate of the monastery."

"And what becomes of you and the horses?" said Arthur.

"We will rest," said Thiebault, "in the hospital maintained by the good fathers at the bottom of the mountain, for the accommodation of those who attend on pilgrims;—for I promise you the shrine is visited by many who come from afar, and are attended both by man and horse.—Care not for me,—I shall be first under cover; but there muster yonder in the west some threatening clouds, from which your seignorie may suffer inconvenience, unless you reach the convent in time. I will give you an hour to do the feat, and will say you are as active as a chamois hunter, if you reach it within the time."

Arthur looked around him, and did indeed remark a mustering of clouds in the distant west, which threatened soon to change the character of the day, which had hitherto been brilliantly clear, and so serene that the falling of a leaf might have been heard. He therefore turned him to the steep and rocky path which ascended the mountain, sometimes by scaling almost precipitous rocks, and sometimes by reaching their tops by a more circuitous process. It winded through thickets of wild boxwood and other

low aromatic shrubs, which afforded some pasture for the mountain-goats, but were a bitter annoyance to the traveller who had to press through them. Such obstacles were so frequent, that the full hour allowed by Thiebault had elapsed before he stood on the summit of Mont Saint Victoire, and in front of the singular convent of the same name.

We have already said, that the crest of the mountain, consisting entirely of one bare and solid rock, was divided by a cleft or opening into two heads or peaks, between which the convent was built, occupying all the space between them. The front of the building was of the most ancient and sombre cast of the old Gothic, or rather, as it has been termed, the Saxon; and in that respect corresponded with the savage exterior of the naked cliffs, of which the structure seemed to make a part, and by which it was entirely surrounded, excepting a small open space of more level ground, where, at the expense of much toil, and by carrying earth up the hill, from different spots where they could collect it in small

quantities, the good fathers had been able to arrange the accommodations of a garden.

A bell summoned a lay-brother, the porter of this singularly situated monastery, to whom Arthur announced himself as an English merchant, Philipson by name, who came to pay his duty to Queen Margaret. The porter, with much respect, showed the stranger into the convent, and ushered him into a parlour, which, looking towards Aix, commanded an extensive and splendid prospect over the southern and western parts of Provence. This was the direction in which Arthur had approached the mountain from Aix; but the circuitous path by which he had ascended had completely carried him round the hill. The western side of the monastery, to which the parlour looked, commanded the noble view we have mentioned; and a species of balcony, which, connecting the two twin crags, at this place not above four or five yards asunder, ran along the front of the building, and appeared to be constructed for the purpose of enjoying it. But on stepping from one of the windows of the parlour upon this battle-

mented bartizan, Arthur became aware that the wall on which the parapet rested stretched along the edge of a precipice, which sunk sheer down five hundred feet at least from the foundations of the convent. Surprised and startled at finding himself on so giddy a verge, Arthur turned his eyes from the gulf beneath him to admire the distant landscape, partly illumined, with ominous lustre, by the now westerly sun. The setting beams showed in dark red splendour a vast variety of hill and dale, champaign and cultivated ground, with towns, churches, and castles, some of which rose from among trees, while others seemed founded on rocky eminences; others again lurked by the side of streams or lakes, to which the heat and drought of the climate naturally attracted them.

The rest of the landscape presented similar objects when the weather was serene, but they were now rendered indistinct, or altogether obliterated, by the sullen shade of the approaching clouds, which gradually spread over great part of the horizon, and threatened altogether to eclipse the sun, though the lord of the ho-

rizon still struggled to maintain his influence, and, like a dying hero, seemed most glorious even in the moment of defeat. Wild sounds, like groans and howls, formed by the wind in the numerous caverns of the rocky mountain, added to the terrors of the scene, and seemed to foretell the fury of some distant storm, though the air in general was even unnaturally calm and breathless. In gazing on this extraordinary scene, Arthur did justice to the monks who had chosen this wild and grotesque situation, from which they could witness Nature in her wildest and grandest demonstrations, and compare the nothingness of humanity with her awful convulsions.

So much was Arthur awed by the scene before him, that he had almost forgotten, while gazing from the bartizan, the important business which had brought him to this place, when it was suddenly recalled by finding himself in the presence of Margaret of Anjou, who, not seeing him in the parlour of reception, had stept upon the balcony, that she might meet with him the sooner.

The Queen's dress was black, without any ornament except a gold coronal of an inch in breadth, restraining her long black tresses, of which advancing years, and misfortunes, had partly altered the hue. There was placed within the circlet a black plume with a red rose, the last of the season, which the good father who kept the garden had presented to her that morning, as the badge of her husband's house. Care, fatigue, and sorrow, seemed to dwell on her brow and her features. To another messenger, she would in all probability have administered a sharp rebuke, for not being alert in his duty to receive her as she entered; but Arthur's age and appearance corresponded with that of her loved and lost son. He was the son of a lady whom Margaret had loved with almost sisterly affection, and the presence of Arthur continued to excite in the dethroned Queen the same feelings of maternal tenderness which they had awakened on their first meeting in the Cathedral of Strasburg. She raised him as he kneeled at her feet, spoke to him with much kindness, and encouraged him to detail at full length

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASW…

his father's message, and such other news as his brief residence at Dijon had made him acquainted with.

She demanded which way Duke Charles had moved with his army.

"As I was given to understand by the master of his artillery," said Arthur, "towards the Lake of Neufchatel, on which side he proposes his first attack on the Swiss."

"The headstrong fool!" said Queen Margaret—"he resembles the poor lunatic, who went to the summit of the mountain, that he might meet the rain half way.—Does thy father then," continued Margaret, "advise me to give up the last remains of the extensive territories once the dominions of our royal House, and for some thousand crowns, and the paltry aid of a few hundred lances, to relinquish what is left of our patrimony to our proud and selfish kinsman of Burgundy, who extends his claim to our all, and affords so little help, or even promise of help, in return?"

"I should have ill discharged my father's commission," said Arthur, "if I had left your

Highness to think that he recommends so great a sacrifice. He feels most deeply the Duke of Burgundy's grasping desire of dominion. Nevertheless, he thinks that Provence must, on King René's death, or sooner, fall either to the share of Duke Charles, or to Louis of France, whatever opposition your Highness may make to such a destination; and it may be that my father, as a knight and a soldier, hopes much from obtaining the means to make another attempt on Britain. But the decision must rest with your Highness."

"Young man," said the Queen, "the contemplation of a question so doubtful almost deprives me of reason."

As she spoke, she sunk down as one who needs rest, on a stone-seat placed on the very verge of the balcony, regardless of the storm, which now began to rise with dreadful gusts of wind, the course of which being intermitted and altered by the crags round which they howled, it seemed as if in very deed Boreas, and Eurus, and Caurus, unchaining the winds from every

quarter of heaven, were contending for mastery around the convent of our Lady of Victory. Amid this tumult, and amid billows of mist which concealed the bottom of the precipice, and masses of clouds which racked fearfully over their heads, the roar of the descending waters rather resembled the fall of cataracts than the rushing of torrents of rain. The seat on which Margaret had placed herself was in a considerable degree sheltered from the storm, but its eddies, varying in every direction, often tossed aloft her dishevelled hair; and we cannot describe the appearance of her noble and beautiful, yet ghastly and wasted features, agitated strongly by anxious hesitation, and conflicting thoughts, unless to those of our readers who have had the advantage of having seen our inimitable Siddons in such a character as this. Arthur, confounded by anxiety and terror, could only beseech her Majesty to retire before the fury of the approaching storm, into the interior of the convent.

"No," she replied with firmness; "roofs and walls have ears, and monks, though they

have forsworn the world, are not the less curious to know what passes beyond their cells. It is in this place you must hear what I have to say; as a soldier, you should scorn a blast of wind or a shower of rain; and to me, who have often held counsel amidst the sound of trumpets and clash of arms, prompt for instant fight, the war of elements is an unnoticed trifle. I tell thee, young Arthur Vere, as I would to your father—as I would to my son—if indeed Heaven had left such a blessing to a wretch forlorn"——

She paused, and then proceeded.

"I tell thee, as I would have told my beloved Edward, that Margaret, whose resolutions were once firm and immovable as these rocks among which we are placed, is now doubtful and variable as the clouds which are drifting around us. I told your father, in the joy of meeting once more a subject of such inappreciable loyalty, of the sacrifices I would make to assure the assistance of Charles of Burgundy, to so gallant an undertaking as that proposed to him by the faithful Oxford. But since I saw him, I

have had cause of deep reflection. I met my aged father only to offend, and, I say it with shame, to insult the old man in presence of his people. Our tempers are as opposed as the sunshine, which a short space since gilded a serene and beautiful landscape, differs from the tempests which are now wasting it. I spurned with open scorn and contempt what he, in his mistaken affection, had devised for means of consolation, and disgusted with the idle follies which he had devised for curing the melancholy of a dethroned Queen, a widowed spouse—and, alas! a childless mother,—I retired hither from the noisy and idle mirth, which was the bitterest aggravation of my sorrows. Such and so gentle is René's temper, that even my unfilial conduct will not diminish my influence over him; and if your father had announced, that the Duke of Burgundy, like a knight and a sovereign, had cordially and nobly entered into the plan of the faithful Oxford, I could have found it in my heart to obtain the cession of territory his cold and ambitious policy requires, in order to ensure the assistance, which he now postpones to afford, till he

has gratified his own haughty humour by settling needless quarrels with his unoffending neighbours. Since I have been here, and calmness and solitude have given me time to reflect, I have thought on the offences I have given the old man, and on the wrongs I was about to do him. My father, let me do him justice, is also the father of his people. They have dwelt under their vines and fig-trees, in ignoble ease perhaps, but free from oppression and exaction, and their happiness has been that of their good King. Must I change all this?—Must I aid in turning over these contented people to a fierce, headlong, arbitrary prince?—May I not break even the easy and thoughtless heart of my poor old father, should I succeed in urging him to do so?—These are questions which I shudder even to ask myself. On the other hand, to disappoint the toils, the venturous hopes of your father, to forego the only opportunity which may ever again offer itself, of revenge on the bloody traitors of York, and restoration of the House of Lancaster!—Arthur, the scene around us is not so convulsed

by the fearful tempest, and the driving clouds, as my mind is by doubt and uncertainty."

"Alas," replied Arthur, "I am too young and inexperienced to be your Majesty's adviser in a case so arduous. I would my father had been in presence himself."

"I know what he would have said," replied the Queen; "but knowing all, I despair of aid from human counsellors—I have sought others, but they also are deaf to my entreaties. Yes, Arthur, Margaret's misfortunes have rendered her superstitious. Know, that beneath these rocks, and under the foundation of this convent, there runs a cavern, entering by a secret and defended passage a little to the westward of the summit, and running through the mountain, having an opening to the south, from which, as from this bartizan, you can view the landscape so lately seen from this balcony, or the strife of winds and confusion of clouds which we now behold. In the middle of this cavernous thoroughfare is a natural pit, or perforation, of great, but unknown depth. A stone dropped into it is heard to dash from side to

side, until the noise of its descent, thundering from cliff to cliff, dies away in distant and faint tinkling, less loud than that of a sheep's bell at a mile's distance. The common people, in their jargon, call this fearful gulf, Lou Garagoule; and the traditions of the Monastery annex wild and fearful recollections to a place in itself sufficiently terrible. Oracles, it is said, spoke from thence in pagan days, by subterranean voices, arising from the abyss; and from these the Roman general is said to have heard, in strange and uncouth rhymes, promises of the victory which gives name to this mountain. These oracles, it is averred, may be yet consulted after performance of strange rites, in which heathen ceremonies are mixed with Christian acts of devotion. The abbots of Mont Saint Victoire have denounced the consultation of Lou Garagoule, and the spirits who reside there, to be criminal. But as the sin may be expiated by presents to the church, by masses, and penances, the door is sometimes opened by the complaisant fathers to those whose daring curiosity leads them, at all risks, and by what-

ever means, to search into futurity. Arthur, I have made the experiment, and am even now returned from the gloomy cavern, in which, according to the traditional ritual, I have spent six hours by the margin of the gulf, a place so dismal, that after its horrors even this tempestuous scene is refreshing."

The Queen stopped, and Arthur, the more struck with the wild tale, that it reminded him of his place of imprisonment at La Ferette, asked anxiously, if her enquiries had obtained any answer.

"None whatever," replied the unhappy Princess. "The demons of Garagoule, if there be such, are deaf to the suit of an unfortunate wretch like me, to whom neither friends nor fiends will afford counsel or assistance. It is my father's circumstances which prevent my instant and strong resolution. Were my own claims on this piping and paltry nation of Troubadours alone interested, I could, for the chance of once more setting my foot in merry England, as easily and willingly resign them, and their paltry coronet, as I commit to the storm this

idle emblem of the royal rank, which I have lost."

As Margaret spoke, she tore from her hair the sable feather and rose which the tempest had detached from the circlet in which they were placed, and tossed them from the battlement with a gesture of wild energy. They were instantly whirled off in a bickering eddy of the agitated clouds, which swept the feather far distant into empty space, through which the eye could not pursue it. But while that of Arthur involuntarily strove to follow its course, a contrary gust of wind caught the red rose, and drove it back against his breast, so that it was easy for him to catch hold of and retain it.

"Joy, joy, and good fortune, royal mistress!" he said, returning to her the emblematic flower; "the tempest brings back the badge of Lancaster to its proper owner."

"I accept the omen," said Margaret; "but it concerns yourself, noble youth, and not me. The feather, which is borne away to waste and desolation, is Margaret's emblem. My eyes will never see the restoration of the line of

Lancaster. But you will live to behold it, and to aid to achieve it, and to dye our red rose deeper yet in the blood of tyrants and traitors. My thoughts are so strangely poised, that a feather or a flower may turn the scale. But my head is still giddy, and my heart sick.—To-morrow you shall see another Margaret, and till then adieu."

It was time to retire, for the tempest began to be mingled with fiercer showers of rain. When they re-entered the parlour, the Queen clapped her hands, and two female attendants entered.

"Let the Father Abbot know," she said, "that it is our desire that this young gentleman receive for this night such hospitality as befits an esteemed friend of ours.—Till to-morrow, young sir, farewell."

With a countenance which betrayed not the late emotion of her mind, and with a stately courtesy, that would have become her when she graced the halls of Windsor, she extended her hand, which the youth saluted respectfully. After her leaving the parlour, the Abbot enter-

ed, and in his attention to Arthur's entertainment and accommodation for the evening, showed his anxiety to meet and obey Queen Margaret's wishes.

CHAPTER VIII.

——— Want you a man
Experienced in the world and its affairs?
Here he is for your purpose.—He's a monk.
He hath forsworn the world and all its work—
The rather that he knows it passing well,
Special the worst of it, for he's a monk.

Old Play.

While the dawn of the morning was yet grey, Arthur was awakened by a loud ringing at the gate of the monastery, and presently afterwards the porter entered the cell which had been allotted to him for his lodgings, to tell him, that, if his name was Arthur Philipson, a brother of their order had brought him dispatches from his father. The youth started up, hastily attired himself, and was introduced, in the parlour, to a Carmelite monk, being of the

same order with the community of Saint Victoire.

"I have ridden many a mile, young man, to present you with this letter," said the monk, "having undertaken to your father that it should be delivered without delay. I came to Aix last night during the storm, and learning at the palace that you had ridden hither, I mounted as soon as the tempest abated, and here I am."

"I am beholden to you, father," said the youth; "and if I could repay your pains with a small donative to your convent"——

"By no means," answered the good father; "I took my personal trouble out of friendship to your father, and mine own errand led me this way. The expenses of my long journey have been amply provided for. But open your packet, I can answer your questions at leisure."

The young man accordingly stepped into an embrasure of the window, and read as follows:—

"SON ARTHUR,—Touching the state of the

country, in so far as concerns the safety of travelling, know, that the same is precarious. The Duke hath taken the towns of Brie and Granson, and put to death five hundred men, whom he made prisoners in garrison there. But the Confederates are approaching with a large force, and God will judge for the right. Howsoever the game may go, these are sharp wars, in which little quarter is spoken of on either side, and therefore there is no safety for men of our profession, till something decisive shall happen. In the meantime, you may assure the widowed lady, that our correspondent continues well disposed to purchase the property which she has in hand; but will scarce be able to pay the price till his present pressing affairs shall be settled, which I hope will be in time to permit us to embark the funds in the profitable adventure I told our friend of. I have employed a friar, travelling to Provence, to carry this letter, which I trust will come safe. The bearer may be trusted.

"Your affectionate father,

"JOHN PHILIPSON."

Arthur easily comprehended the latter part of the epistle, and rejoiced he had received it at so critical a moment. He questioned the Carmelite on the amount of the Duke's army, which the Monk stated to amount to sixty thousand men, while he said the Confederates, though making every exertion, had not yet been able to assemble the third part of that number. The young Ferrand de Vaudemont was with their army, and had received, it was thought, some secret assistance from France; but as he was little known in arms, and had few followers, the empty title of general which he bore, added little to the strength of the Confederates. Upon the whole, he reported, that every chance appeared to be in favour of Charles, and Arthur, who looked upon his success as presenting the only chance in favour of his father's enterprise, was not a little pleased to find it ensured, as far as depended on a great superiority of force. He had no leisure to make farther enquiries, for the Queen at that moment entered the apartment, and the Carmelite, learning her

quality, withdrew from her presence in deep reverence.

The paleness of her complexion still bespoke the fatigues of the day preceding; but as she graciously bestowed on Arthur the greetings of the morning, her voice was firm, her eye clear, and her countenance steady. "I meet you," she said, "not as I left you, but determined in my purpose. I am satisfied, that if René does not voluntarily yield up his throne of Provence, by some step like that which we propose, he will be hurled from it by violence, in which, it may be, his life will not be spared. We will, therefore, to work with all speed—the worst is, that I cannot leave this convent till I have made the necessary penances for having visited the Garagoule, without performing which, I were no Christian woman. When you return to Aix, enquire at the palace for my secretary, with whom this line will give you credence. I have, even before this door of hope opened to me, endeavoured to form an estimate of King René's situation, and collected the documents for that

purpose. Tell him to send me, duly sealed, and under fitting charge, the small cabinet hooped with silver. Hours of penance for past errors may be employed to prevent others; and, from the contents of that cabinet, I shall learn whether I am, in this weighty matter, sacrificing my father's interests to my own half-desperate hopes. But of this I have little or no doubt. I can cause the deeds of resignation and transference to be drawn up here under my own direction, and arrange the execution of them when I return to Aix, which shall be the first moment after my penance is concluded."

"And this letter, gracious madam," said Arthur, "will inform you what events are approaching, and of what importance it may be to take time by the fore-lock. Place me but in possession of these momentous deeds, and I will travel night and day till I reach the Duke's camp. I shall find him most likely in the moment of victory, and with his heart too much open to refuse a boon to the royal kinswoman who is surrendering to him all. We will—we must—in such an hour, obtain princely suc-

cours; and we shall soon see if the licentious Edward of York, the savage Richard, the treacherous and perjured Clarence, are hereafter to be lords of merry England, or whether they must give place to a more rightful sovereign and better man. But O! royal madam, all depends on haste."

"True—yet a few days may—nay, must—cast the die between Charles and his opponents; and, ere making so great a surrender, it were as well to be assured that he whom we would propitiate, is in capacity to assist us. All the events of a tragic and varied life have led me to see there is no such thing as an inconsiderable enemy. I will make haste, however, trusting in the interim we may have good news from the banks of the lake at Neufchatel."

"But who shall be employed to draw these most important deeds?" said the young man.

Margaret mused ere she replied,—"The father guardian is complaisant, and I think faithful; but I would not willingly repose confidence in one of the Provençal monks. Stay, let me think—your father says the Carmelite who

brought the letter may be trusted—he shall do the turn. He is a stranger, and will be silent for a piece of money. Farewell, Arthur de Vere.—You will be treated with all hospitality by my father. If thou dost receive farther tidings, thou wilt let me know them; or, should I have instructions to send, thou wilt hear from me.—So, benedicite."

Arthur proceeded to wind down the mountain at a much quicker pace than he had ascended on the day before. The weather was now gloriously serene, and the beauties of vegetation, in a country where it never totally slumbers, were at once delicious and refreshing. His thoughts wandered from the crags of Mont Saint Victoire, to the cliff of the canton of Unterwalden, and fancy recalled the moments when his walks through such scenery were not solitary, but when there was a form by his side, whose simple beauty was engraved on his memory. Such thoughts were of a pre-occupying nature; and I grieve to say, that they entirely drowned the recollection of the mysterious caution given him by his father,

intimating that Arthur might not be able to comprehend such letters as he should receive from him, till they were warmed before a fire.

The first thing which reminded him of this singular caution, was the seeing a chafing-dish of charcoal in the kitchen of the hostelrie at the bottom of the mountain, where he found Thiebault and his horses. This was the first fire which he had seen since receiving his father's letter, and it reminded him not unnaturally of what the Earl had recommended. Great was his surprise to see, that after exposing the paper to the fire as if to dry it, a word emerged in an important passage of the letter, and the concluding words now read,—"The bearer may *not* be trusted." Wellnigh choked with shame and vexation, Arthur could think of no other remedy than instantly to return to the convent, and acquaint the Queen with this discovery, which he hoped still to convey to her in time to prevent any risk being incurred by the Carmelite's treachery.

Incensed at himself, and eager to redeem his fault, he bent his manly breast against the steep

hill, which was probably never scaled in so short time as by the young heir of De Vere; for, within forty minutes from his commencing the ascent, he stood breathless and panting in the presence of Queen Margaret, who was alike surprised at his appearance and his exhausted condition.

"Trust not the Carmelite!" he exclaimed—"You are betrayed, noble Queen, and it is by my negligence. Here is my dagger—bid me strike it into my heart!"

Margaret demanded and obtained a more special explanation, and when it was given, she said, "It is an unhappy chance; but your father's instructions ought to have been more distinct. I have told yonder Carmelite the purpose of the contracts, and engaged with him to draw them. He has but now left me to serve at the choir. There is no withdrawing the confidence I have unhappily placed; but I can easily prevail with the Father Guardian to prevent the Monk from leaving the convent till we are indifferent to his secrecy. It is our best chance to secure it, and we will take care that

what inconvenience he sustains by his detention shall be well recompensed. Meanwhile, rest thou, good Arthur, and undo the throat of thy mantle. Poor youth, thou art wellnigh exhausted with thy haste."

Arthur obeyed, and sat down on a seat in the parlour; for the speed which he had exerted rendered him almost incapable of standing.

"If I could but see," he said, "the false monk, I would find a way to charm him to secrecy!"

"Better leave him to me," said the Queen; "and in a word, I forbid you to meddle with him. The coif can treat better with the cowl than the casque can do. Say no more of him. I joy to see you wear around your neck the holy relic I bestowed on you;—but what Moorish charmlet is that you wear beside it? Alas! I need not ask. Your heightened colour, almost as deep as when you entered a quarter of an hour hence, confesses a true-love token. Alas! poor boy, hast thou not only such a share of thy country's woes to bear, but also thine own load of affliction, not the less poignant now

that future time will show thee how fantastic it is! Margaret of Anjou could once have aided wherever thy affections were placed; but now she can only contribute to the misery of her friends, not to their happiness. But this lady of the charm, Arthur, is she fair—is she wise and virtuous—is she of noble birth—and does she love?"—She perused his countenance with the glance of an eagle, and continued, "To all, thou wouldst answer Yes, if shamefacedness permitted thee. Love her then in turn, my gallant boy, for love is the parent of brave actions. Go, my noble youth—high-born and loyal, valorous and virtuous, enamoured and youthful, to what mayst thou not rise? The chivalry of ancient Europe only lives in a bosom like thine. Go, and let the praises of a Queen fire thy bosom with the love of honour and achievement. In three days we meet at Aix."

Arthur, highly gratified with the Queen's condescension, once more left her presence.

Returning down the mountain with a speed very different from that which he had used in

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARA...

the ascent, he again found his Provençal squire, who had remained in much surprise at witnessing the confusion in which his master had left the inn, almost immediately after he had entered it without any apparent haste or agitation. Arthur explained his hasty return by alleging he had forgot his purse at the convent. "Nay, in that case," said Thiebault, "considering what you left and where you left it, I do not wonder at your speed, though, our Lady save me, as I never saw living creature, save a goat with a wolf at his heels, make his way over crag and briers with half such rapidity as you did."

They reached Aix after about an hour's riding, and Arthur lost no time in waiting upon the good King René, who gave him a kind reception, both in respect of the letter from the Duke of Burgundy, and in consideration of his being an Englishman, the avowed subject of the unfortunate Margaret. The placable monarch soon forgave his young guest the want of complaisance, with which he had eschewed to listen to his compositions; and Arthur speedily found, that to apologize for his want

of breeding in that particular, was likely to lead to a great deal more rehearsing than he could find patience to listen to. He could only avoid the old King's extreme desire to recite his own poems, and perform his own music, by engaging him in speaking of his daughter Margaret. Arthur had been sometimes induced to doubt the influence which the Queen boasted herself to possess over her aged father; but on being acquainted with him personally, he became convinced that her powerful understanding and violent passions inspired the feebler-minded and passive King with a mixture of pride, affection, and fear, which united to give her the most ample authority over him.

Although she had parted with him but a day or two since, and in a manner so ungracious on her side, René was as much overjoyed at hearing of the probability of her speedy return, as the fondest father could have been at the prospect of being reunited to the most dutiful child, whom he had not seen for years. The old

King was impatient as a boy for the day of her arrival, and, still strangely unenlightened on the difference of her taste from his own, he was with difficulty induced to lay aside a project of meeting her in the character of old Palemon,—

"The prince of shepherds, and their pride,"

at the head of an Arcadian procession of nymphs and swains, to inspire whose choral dances and songs, every pipe and tambourine in the country was to be placed in requisition. Even the old seneschal, however, intimated his disapprobation of this species of *joyeuse entrée*; so that René suffered himself at length to be persuaded that the Queen was too much occupied by the religious impressions to which she had been of late exposed, to receive any agreeable sensation from sights or sounds of levity. The King gave way to reasons which he could not sympathize with; and thus Margaret escaped the shock of a welcome, which would perhaps have driven her in her impa-

tience back to the mountain of Saint Victoire, and the sable cavern of Lou Garagoule.

During the time of her absence, the days of the court of Provence were employed in sports and rejoicings of every description; tilting at the barrier with blunted spears, riding at the ring, parties for hare-hunting and falconry, frequented by the youth of both sexes, in the company of whom the King delighted, while the evenings were consumed in dancing and music.

Arthur could not but be sensible, that not long since all this would have made him perfectly happy; but the last months of his existence had developed his understanding and passions. He was now initiated in the actual business of human life, and looked on its amusements with an air of something like contempt; so that among the young and gay noblesse, who composed this merry court, he acquired the title of the youthful philosopher, which was not bestowed upon him, it may be supposed, as inferring any thing of peculiar compliment.

On the fourth day news were received, by an express messenger, that Queen Margaret

would enter Aix before the hour of noon, to resume her residence in her father's palace. The good King René seemed, as it drew nigh, to fear the interview with his daughter as much as he had previously desired it, and contrived to make all around him partake of his fidgety anxiety. He tormented his steward and cooks to recollect what dishes they had ever observed her to taste of with approbation—he pressed the musicians to remember the tunes which she approved, and when one of them boldly replied he had never known her Majesty endure any strain with patience, the old monarch threatened to turn him out of his service for slandering the taste of his daughter. The banquet was ordered to be served at half past eleven, as if accelerating it would have had the least effect upon hurrying the arrival of the expected guests; and the old King, with his napkin over his arm, traversed the hall from window to window, wearying every one with questions, whether they saw any thing of the Queen of England. Exactly as the bells tolled noon, the Queen, with a very small retinue, chiefly English, and in mourning

habits like herself, rode into the town of Aix. King René, at the head of his court, failed not to descend from the front of his stately palace, and move along the street to meet his daughter. Lofty, proud, and jealous of incurring ridicule, Margaret was not pleased with this public greeting in the market-place. But she was desirous at present to make amends for her late petulance, and therefore she descended from her palfrey; and although something shocked at seeing René equipped with a napkin, she humbled herself to bend the knee to him, asking at once his blessing and forgiveness.

"Thou hast—thou hast my blessing, my suffering dove," said the simple King to the proudest and most impatient princess that ever wept for a lost crown.—"And for thy pardon, how canst thou ask it, who never didst me an offence since God made me father to so gracious a child?—Rise, I say rise—nay, it is for me to ask thy pardon—True, I said in my ignorance and thought within myself, that my heart had indited a goodly thing—but it vexed thee. It is therefore for me to crave pardon."—And down

sunk good King René upon both knees; and the people, who are usually captivated with any thing resembling the trick of the scene, applauded with much noise, and some smothered laughter, a situation, in which the royal daughter and her parent seemed about to rehearse the scene of the Roman Charity.

Margaret, sensitively alive to shame, and fully aware that her present position was sufficiently ludicrous in its publicity at least, signed sharply to Arthur, whom she saw in the King's suite, to come to her; and, using his arm to rise, she muttered to him aside, and in English,—"To what saint shall I vow myself, that I may preserve patience when I so much need it!"

"For pity's sake, royal madam, recall your firmness of mind and composure," whispered her esquire, who felt at the moment more embarrassed than honoured by his distinguished office, for he could feel that the Queen actually trembled with vexation and impatience.

They at length resumed their route to the palace, the father and daughter arm in arm, a posture most agreeable to Margaret, who could

bring herself to endure her father's effusions of tenderness, and the general tone of his conversation, so that he was not overheard by others. In the same manner, she bore with laudable patience the teazing attentions which he addressed to her at table, noticed some of his particular courtiers, enquired after others, led the way to his favourite subjects of conversation on poetry, painting, and music, till the good King was as much delighted with the unwonted civilities of his daughter, as ever was lover with the favourable confessions of his mistress, when, after years of warm courtship, the ice of her bosom is at length thawed. It cost the haughty Margaret an effort to bend herself to play this part—her pride rebuked her for stooping to flatter her father's foibles, in order to bring him over to the resignation of his dominions—yet having undertaken to do so, and so much having been already hazarded upon this sole remaining chance of success in an attack upon England, she saw, or was willing to see, no alternative.

Betwixt the banquet, and the ball by which

it was to be followed, the Queen sought an opportunity of speaking to Arthur.

"Bad news, my sage counsellor," she said. "The Carmelite never returned to the convent after the service was over. Having learned that you had come back in great haste, he had, I suppose, concluded he might stand in suspicion, so he left the convent of Mont Saint Victoire."

"We must hasten the measures which your Majesty has resolved to adopt," answered Arthur.

"I will speak with my father to-morrow. Meanwhile, you must enjoy the pleasures of the evening, for to you they may be pleasures.—Young lady of Boisgelin, I give you this cavalier to be your partner for the evening."

The black-eyed and pretty Provençale curtsied with due decorum, and glanced at the handsome young Englishman with an eye of approbation; but whether afraid of his character as a philosopher, or his doubtful rank, added the saving clause,—"If my mother approves."

"Your mother, damsel, will scarce, I think, disapprove of any partner whom you receive

from the hands of Margaret of Anjou. Happy privilege of youth," she added, with a sigh, as the youthful couple went off to take their place in *bransle*,* "which can snatch a flower even on the roughest road."

Arthur acquitted himself so well during the evening, that perhaps the young Countess was only sorry that so gay and handsome a gallant limited his compliments and attentions within the cold bounds of that courtesy enjoined by the rules of ceremony.

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* Bransle, in English, brawl, a species of dance.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. *

CHAPTER IX.

For I have given here my full consent,
To undeck the pompous body of a king,
Make glory base, and sovereignty a slave,
Proud majesty a subject, state a peasant.
Richard II.

THE next day opened a grave scene. King René had not forgotten to arrange the pleasures of the day, when, to his horror and discomfiture, Margaret demanded an interview upon serious business. If there was a proposition in the world which René from his soul detested, it was any that related to the very name of business.

"What was it that his child wanted?" he said. "Was it money? He would give her whatever ready sums he had, though he owned his

exchequer was somewhat bare; yet he had received his income for the season. It was ten thousand crowns. How much should he desire to be paid to her?—the half—three parts—or the whole? All was at her command."

"Alas, my dear father," said Margaret, "it is not my affairs, but your own, on which I desire to speak with you."

"If the affairs are mine," said René, "I am surely master to put them off to another day—to some rainy dull day, fit for no better purpose. See, my love, the hawking party are all on their steeds and ready—the horses are neighing and pawing—the gallants and maidens mounted, and ready with hawk on fist—the spaniels struggling in the leash. It were a sin, with wind and weather to friend, to lose so lovely a morning."

"Let them ride their way," said Queen Margaret, "and find their sport; for the matter I have to speak concerning involves honour and rank, life and means of living."

"Nay, but I have to hear and judge between

Calezon and John of Acqua Mortis, the two most celebrated Troubadours."

"Postpone their cause till to-morrow," said Margaret, "and dedicate an hour or two to more important affairs."

"If you are peremptory," replied King René, "you are aware, my child, I cannot say you nay."

And with reluctance he gave orders for the hawkers to go on and follow their sport, as he could not attend them that day.

The old King then suffered himself, like an unwilling greyhound withheld from the chase, to be led into a separate apartment. To ensure privacy, Margaret stationed her secretary Mordaunt, with Arthur, in an antechamber, giving them orders to prevent all intrusion.

"Nay, for myself, Margaret," said the good-natured old man, "since it must be, I consent to be put *au secret*; but why keep old Mordaunt from taking a walk in this beautiful morning; and why prevent young Arthur from going forth with the rest? I promise you, though they term him a philosopher, yet he showed as light

a pair of heels last night, with the young Countess de Boisgelin, as any gallant in Provence."

"They are come from a country," said Margaret, "in which men are trained from infancy to prefer their duty to their pleasure."

The poor King, led into the council-closet, saw with internal shuddering the fatal cabinet of ebony, bound with silver, which had never been opened but to overwhelm him with weariness, and dolefully calculated how many yawns he must strangle ere he sustained the consideration of its contents. They proved, however, when laid before him, of a kind that excited even his interest, though painfully.

His daughter presented him with a short and clear view of the debts which were secured on his dominions, and for which they were mortgaged in various pieces and parcels. She then showed him, by another schedule, the large claims for which payment was instantly demanded, to discharge which no funds could be found or assigned. The King defended himself like others in his forlorn situation. To every

claim of six, seven, or eight thousand ducats, he replied by the assertion, that he had ten thousand crowns in his chancery, and showed some reluctance to be convinced, till repeatedly urged upon him, that the same sum could not be adequate to the discharge of thirty times the amount.

"Then," said the King, somewhat impatiently, "why not pay off those who are most pressing, and let the others wait till receipts come round?"

"It is a practice which has been too often resorted to," replied the Queen, "and it is but a part of honesty to pay creditors, who have advanced their all in your Grace's service."

"But are we not," said René, "King of both the Sicilies, Naples, Arragon, and Jerusalem? And why is the monarch of such fair kingdoms to be pushed to the wall, like a bankrupt yeoman, for a few bags of paltry crowns?"

"You are indeed monarch of these kingdoms," said Margaret; "but is it necessary to remind your Majesty that it is but as I am Queen of England, in which I have not an acre

of land, and cannot command a penny of revenue? You have no dominions which are a source of revenue, save those which you see in this scroll, with an exact list of the income they afford. It is totally inadequate, you see, to maintain your state, and to pay the large engagements incurred to former creditors."

"It is cruel to press me to the wall thus," said the poor King. "What can I do? If I am poor, I cannot help it. I am sure I would pay the debts you talk of, if I knew the way."

"Royal father, I will show it you.—Resign your useless and unavailing dignity, which, with the pretensions attending it, serves but to make your miseries ridiculous. Resign your rights as a sovereign, and the income which cannot be stretched out to the empty excesses of a beggarly court, will enable you to enjoy, in ease and opulence, all the pleasures you most delight in, as a private baron."

"Margaret, you speak folly," answered René, somewhat sternly. "A king and his people are bound by ties which neither can sever without guilt. My subjects are my flock, I am their

shepherd. They are assigned to my governance by Heaven, and I dare not renounce the charge of protecting them."

"Were you in condition to do so," answered the Queen, "Margaret would bid you fight to the death. But don your harness, long disused—mount your war-steed—cry, René for Provence! and see if an hundred men will gather round your standard. Your fortresses are in the hands of strangers; army you have none; your vassals may have good will, but they lack all military skill and soldierlike discipline. You stand but the mere skeleton of monarchy, which France or Burgundy may prostrate on the earth, whichever first puts forth his arm to throw it down."

The tears trickled fast down the old King's cheeks, when this unflattering prospect was set before him, and he could not forbear owning his total want of power to defend himself, and his dominions, and admitting that he had often thought of the necessity of compounding for his resignation with one of his powerful neighbours.

"It was thy interest, Margaret, harsh and

severe as you are, which prevented my entering, before now, into measures most painful to my feelings, but perhaps best calculated for my advantage. But I had hoped it would hold on for my day; and thou, my child, with the talents Heaven has given thee, wouldst, I thought, have found remedy for distresses which I cannot escape, otherwise than by shunning the thoughts of them."

"If it is in earnest you speak of my interest," said Margaret, "know, that your resigning Provence will satisfy the nearest, and almost the only wish that my bosom can form; but, so judge me Heaven, as it is on your account, gracious sire, as well as mine, that I advise your compliance."

"Say no more on't, child; give me the parchment of resignation, and I will sign it: I see thou hast it ready drawn; let us sign it, and then we will overtake the hawkers. We must suffer woe, but there is little need to sit down and weep for it."

"Do you not ask," said Margaret, surprised

at his apathy, "to whom you cede your dominions?"

"What boots it," answered the King, "since they must be no more my own? It must be either to Charles of Burgundy, or my nephew Louis—both powerful and politic princes. God send my poor people may have no cause to wish their old man back again, whose only pleasure was to see them happy and mirthful."

"It is to Burgundy you resign Provence," said Margaret.

"I would have preferred him," answered René; "he is fierce, but not malignant. One word more,—are my subjects' privileges and immunities fully secured?"

"Amply," replied the Queen; "and your own wants of all kinds honourably provided for. I would not leave the stipulations in your favour in blank, though I might perhaps have trusted Charles of Burgundy, where money alone is concerned."

"I ask not for myself—with my viol and my pencil, René the Troubadour will be as happy as ever was René the King."

So saying, with practical philosophy he whistled the burden of his last composed ariette, and signed away the rest of his royal possessions without pulling off his glove, or even reading the instrument.

"What is this?" he said, looking at another and separate parchment of much briefer contents. "Must my kinsman Charles have both the Sicilies, Catalonia, Naples, and Jerusalem, as well as the poor remainder of Provence? Methinks, in decency, some greater extent of parchment should have been allowed to so ample a cession."

"That deed," says Margaret, "only disowns and relinquishes all countenance of Ferrand de Vaudemont's rash attempt on Lorraine, and renounces all quarrel on that account against Charles of Burgundy."

For once Margaret miscalculated the tractability of her father's temper. René positively started, coloured, and stammered with passion, as he interrupted her—"*Only* disown—*only* relinquish—*only* renounce the cause of my grandchild, the son of my dear Yolande—his right-

ful claims on his mother's inheritance!—Margaret, I am ashamed for thee. Thy pride is an excuse for thy evil temper; but what is pride worth which can stoop to commit an act of dishonourable meanness? To desert, nay disown my own flesh and blood, because the youth is a bold knight under shield, and disposed to battle for his right—I were worthy that harp and horn rung out shame on me, should I listen to thee."

Margaret was overcome in some measure by the old man's unexpected opposition. She endeavoured, however, to show that there was no occasion, in point of honour, why René should engage in the cause of a wild adventurer, whose right, be it good be it bad, was only upheld by some petty and underhand supplies of money from France, and the countenance of a few of the restless banditti who inhabit the borders of all nations. But ere René could answer, voices, raised to an unusual pitch, were heard in the antechamber, the door of which was flung open by an armed knight, covered with dust, who exhibited all the marks of a long journey.

"Here I am," he said, "father of my mother—behold your grandson—Ferrand de Vaudemont; the son of your lost Yolande kneels at your feet, and implores a blessing on him and his enterprise."

"Thou hast it," replied René, "and may it prosper with thee, gallant youth, image of thy sainted mother—my blessings, my prayers, my hopes, go with you."

"And you, fair aunt of England," said the young knight, addressing Margaret, "you who are yourself dispossessed by traitors, will you not own the cause of a kinsman who is struggling for his inheritance?"

"I wish all good to your person, fair nephew," answered the Queen of England, "although your features are strange to me. But to advise this old man to adopt your cause, when it is desperate in the eyes of all wise men, were impious madness."

"Is my cause then so desperate?" said Ferrand; "forgive me if I was not aware of it. And does my aunt Margaret say this, whose strength of mind supported Lancaster so long,

after the spirits of her warriors had been quelled by defeat? What—forgive me, for my cause must be pleaded—what would you have said had my mother Yolande been capable to advise her father to disown your own Edward, had God permitted him to reach Provence in safety?"

"Edward," said Margaret, weeping as she spoke, "was incapable of desiring his friends to espouse a quarrel that was irremediable. His, too, was a cause for which mighty princes and peers laid lance in rest."

"Yet Heaven blessed it not—" said Vaudemont.

"Thine," continued Margaret, "is but embraced by the robber nobles of Germany, the upstart burghers of the Rhine cities, the paltry and clownish Confederates of the Cantons."

"But Heaven *has blessed it*," replied Vaudemont. "Know, proud woman, that I come to interrupt your treacherous intrigues, no petty adventurer, subsisting and maintaining warfare by sleight rather than force, but a conqueror from a bloody field of battle, in which

Heaven has tamed the pride of the tyrant of Burgundy."

"It is false!" said the Queen, starting; "I believe it not."

"It is true," said De Vaudemont, "as true as heaven is above us.—It is four days since I left the field of Granson, heaped with Burgundy's mercenaries—his wealth, his jewels, his plate, his magnificent decorations, the prize of the poor Swiss, who scarce can tell their value. Know you this, Queen Margaret?" continued the young soldier, showing the well-known jewel which decorated the Duke's order of the Golden Fleece; "think you not the lion was closely hunted when he left such trophies as these behind him?"

Margaret looked with dazzled eyes and bewildered thoughts, upon a token which confirmed the Duke's defeat, and the extinction of her last hopes. Her father, on the contrary, was struck with the heroism of the young warrior, a quality which, except as it existed in his daughter Margaret, had, he feared, taken leave

of his family. Admiring in his heart the youth who exposed himself to danger for the meed of praise, almost as much as he did the poets by whom the warrior's fame is rendered immortal, he hugged his grandson to his bosom, bidding him "gird on his sword in strength," and assuring him, if money could advance his affairs, he, King René, could command ten thousand crowns, any part, or the whole of which, was at Ferrand's command; thus giving proof of what had been said of him, that his head was incapable of containing two ideas at the same time.

We return to Arthur, who, with the Queen of England's secretary, Mordaunt, had been not a little surprised by the entrance of the Count de Vaudemont, calling himself Duke of Lorraine, into the anteroom, in which they kept a kind of guard, followed by a tall strong Swiss, with a huge halbert over his shoulder. The prince naming himself, Arthur did not think it becoming to oppose his entrance to the presence of his grandfather and aunt, especially as

it was obvious that his opposition must have created an affray. In the huge staring halbardier, who had sense enough to remain in the anteroom, Arthur was not a little surprised to recognise Sigismund Biederman, who, after staring wildly at him for a moment, like a dog which suddenly recognises a favourite, rushed up to the young Englishman with a wild cry of gladness, and in hurried accents, told him how happy he was to meet with him, and that he had matters of importance to tell him. It was at no time easy for Sigismund to arrange his ideas, and now they were altogether confused, by the triumphant joy which he expressed for the recent victory of his countrymen over the Duke of Burgundy; and it was with wonder that Arthur heard his confused and rude, but faithful tale.

"Look you, King Arthur, the Duke had come up with his huge army as far as Granson, which is near the outlet of the great lake of Neufchatel. There were five or six hundred confederates in the place, and they held it till provisions failed, and then you know they were

forced to give it over. But though hunger is hard to bear, they had better have borne it a day or two longer, for the butcher Charles hung them all up by the neck, upon trees round the place,—and there was no swallowing for them, you know, after such usage as that. Meanwhile all was busy on our hills, and every man that had a sword or lance accoutered himself with it. We met at Neufchatel, and some Germans joined us with the noble Duke of Lorraine. Ah, King Arthur, there is a leader! —we all think him second but to Rudolf of Donnerhugel—you saw him even now—it was he that went into that room—and you saw him before,—it is he that was the Blue Knight of Basle; but we called him Laurenz then, for Rudolf said, his presence among us must not be known to our father, and I did not know myself at that time who he really was. Well, when we came to Neufchatel we were a goodly company; we were fifteen thousand stout confederates, and of others, Germans and Lorraine men, I will warrant you five thousand more. We heard that the Burgundian was sixty thousand in the

field; but we heard, at the same time, that Charles had hung up our brethren like dogs, and the man was not among us—among the confederates, I mean—who would stay to count heads, when the question was to avenge them. I would you could have heard the roar of fifteen thousand Swiss demanding to be led against the butcher of their brethren! My father himself, who, you know, is usually so eager for peace, now gave the first voice for battle; so, in the grey of the morning, we descended the lake towards Granson, with tears in our eyes and weapons in our hands, determined to have death or vengeance. We came to a sort of strait, between Vauxmoreux and the lake; there were horse on the level ground between the mountain and the lake, and a large body of infantry on the side of the hill. The Duke of Lorraine and his followers engaged the horse, while we climbed the hill to dispossess the infantry. It was with us the affair of a moment. Every man of us was at home among the crags, and Charles's men were stuck among them as thou wert, Arthur, when thou didst first come to Geierstein. But there

were no kind maidens to lend them their hands to help them down. No, no—There were pikes, clubs, and halberts, many a one, to dash and thrust them from places where they could hardly keep their feet had there been no one to disturb them. So the horsemen pushed by the Lorrainers, and seeing us upon their flank, fled as fast as their horses could carry them. Then we drew together again on a fair field, which is *buon campagna,* as the Italians say, where the hills retire from the lake. But lo you, we had scarce arrayed our ranks, when we heard such a din and clash of instruments, such a trample of their great horses, such a shouting and crying of men, as if all the soldiers, and all the minstrels in France and Germany, were striving which should make the loudest noise. Then there was a huge cloud of dust approaching us, and we began to see we must do or die, for this was Charles and his whole army come to support his vanguard. A blast from the mountain dispersed the dust, for they had halted to prepare for battle. O, good Arthur! you would have given ten years of life but to have

seen the sight! There were thousands of horse all in complete array, glancing against the sun, and hundreds of knights with crowns of gold and silver on their helmets, and thick masses of spears on foot, and cannon, as they call them. I did not know what things they were, which they drew on heavily with bullocks and placed before their army, but I knew more of them before the morning was over. Well, we were ordered to draw up in a hollow square, as we are taught at exercise, and before we pushed forwards, we were commanded, as is the godly rule and guise of our warfare, to kneel down and pray to God, Our Lady, and the blessed saints; and we afterwards learned that Charles, in his arrogance, thought we asked for mercy—Ha! ha! ha! a proper jest. If my father once knelt to him, it was for the sake of Christian blood and godly peace; but on the field of battle, Arnold Biederman would not have knelt to him and his whole chivalry, though he had stood alone with his sons on that field. Well, but Charles, supposing we asked grace, was determined to show us that we had asked

it at a graceless face, for he cried, 'Fire my cannon on the coward slaves; it is all the mercy they have to expect from me!'—Bang—bang—bang—off went the things I told you off, like thunder and lightning, and some mischief they did, but the less that we were kneeling; and the saints doubtless gave the huge balls a hoist over the heads of those who were asking grace from them, but from no mortal creatures. So we had the signal to rise and rush on, and I promise you there were no sluggards. Every man felt ten men's strength. My halbert is no child's toy—if you have forgotten it, there it is—and yet it trembled in my grasp as if it had been a willow wand to drive cows with. On we went, when suddenly the cannon were silent, and the earth shook with another and continued growl and battering, like thunder under ground. It was the men-at-arms rushing to charge us. But our leaders knew their trade, and had seen such a sight before—it was, Halt, halt—kneel down in the front—stoop in the second rank—close shoulder to shoulder like brethren, lean all spears

forward and receive them like an iron wall. On they rushed, and there was a rending of lances that would have served the Unterwalden old women with splinters of firewood for a twelve-month. Down went armed horse—down went accoutred knight—down went banner and bannerman—down went peaked boot and crowned helmet, and of those who fell not a man escaped with life. So they drew off in confusion, and were getting in order to charge again, when the noble Duke Ferrand and his horsemen dashed at them in their own way, and we moved onward to support him. Thus on we pressed, and the foot hardly waited for us, seeing their cavalry so handled. Then if you had seen the dust and heard the blows! the noise of a hundred thousand thrashers, the flight of the chaff which they drive about, would be but a type of it. On my word, I almost thought it shame to dash about my halbert, the rout was so helplessly piteous. Hundreds were slain unresisting, and the whole army was in complete flight."

"My father—my father!" exclaimed Ar-

thur; "in such a rout, what can have become of him?"

"He escaped safely," said the Swiss; "fled with Charles."

"It must have been a bloody field ere he fled," replied the Englishman.

"Nay," answered Sigismund, "he took no part in the fight, but merely remained by Charles; and prisoners said it was well for us, for that he is a man of great counsel and action in the wars. And as to flying, a man in such a matter must go back if he cannot press forward, and there is no shame in it, especially if you be not engaged in your own person."

As he spoke thus, their conversation was interrupted by Mordaunt, with "Hush, hush—the King and Queen come forth."

"What am I to do?" said Sigismund, in some alarm. "I care not for the Duke of Lorraine; but what am I to do when Kings and Queens enter?"

"Do nothing but rise, unbonnet yourself, and be silent."

Sigismund did as he was directed.

King René came forth arm in arm with his grandson; and Margaret followed, with deep disappointment and vexation on her brow. She signed to Arthur as she passed, and said to him —"Make thyself master of the truth of this most unexpected news, and bring the particulars to me. Mordaunt will introduce thee."

She then cast a look on the young Swiss, and replied courteously to his awkward salutation. The royal party then left the room, René bent on carrying his grandson to the sporting-party, which had been interrupted, and Margaret to seek the solitude of her private apartment, and await the confirmation of what she regarded as evil tidings.

They were no sooner passed, than Sigismund observed,—"And so that is a King and Queen! —Peste! the King looks somewhat like old Jacomo, the violer, that used to scrape on the fiddle to us when he came to Geierstein in his rounds. But the Queen is a stately creature. The chief cow of the herd, who carries the bouquets and garlands, and leads the rest to the chalet, has

not a statelier pace. And how deftly you approached her and spoke to her, I could not have done it with so much grace—But it is like that you have served apprentice to the court trade?"

"Leave that for the present, good Sigismund," answered Arthur, "and tell me more of this battle?"

"By Saint Mary, but I must have some victuals and drink first," said Sigismund, "if your credit in this fine place reaches so far."

"Doubt it not, Sigismund," said Arthur; and, by the intervention of Mordaunt, he easily procured, in a more retired apartment, a collation and wine, to which the young Biederman did great honour, smacking his lips with much gusto after the delicious wines, to which, in spite of his father's ascetic precepts, his palate was beginning to be considerably formed and habituated. When he found himself alone with a flask of *cote roti* and a biscuit, and his friend Arthur, he was easily led to continue his tale of conquest.

"Well—where was I—Oh, where we broke their infantry—well—they never rallied, and

fell into greater confusion at every step—and we might have slaughtered one half of them, had we not stopt to examine Charles's camp. Mercy on us, Arthur, what a sight was there! Every pavilion was full of rich clothes, splendid armour, and great dishes and flagons, which some men said were of silver; but I knew there was not so much silver in the world, and was sure they must be of pewter, rarely burnished. Here there were hosts of laced lackeys, and grooms, and pages, and as many attendants as there were soldiers in the army; and thousands, for what I knew, of pretty maidens. By the same token, both menials and maidens placed themselves at the disposal of the victors; but I promise you that my father was right severe on any who would abuse the rights of war. But some of our young men did not mind him, till he taught them obedience with the staff of his halbert. Well, Arthur, there was fine plundering, for the Germans and French that were with us, rifled every thing, and some of our men followed the example—it is very catching—So I got into Charles's own pavilion, where Rudolf

and some of his people were trying to keep out every one, that he might have the spoiling of it himself, I think; but neither he, nor any Bernese of them all, dared lay truncheon over my pate; so I entered, and saw them putting piles of pewter-trenchers, so clean as to look like silver, into chests and trunks. I pressed through them into the inner place, and there was Charles's pallet-bed—I will do him justice, it was the only hard one in his camp—and there were fine sparkling stones and pebbles lying about among gauntlets, boots, vambraces, and suchlike gear—So I thought of your father and you, and looked for something, when what should I see but my old friend here, (here he drew Queen Margaret's necklace from his bosom,) which I knew, because you remember I recovered it from the Scharfgerichter at La Ferette.—'Oho! you pretty sparklers,' said I, 'you shall be Burgundian no longer, but go back to my honest English friends,' and therefore"——

"It is of immense value," said Arthur, "and belongs not to my father or to me, but to the Queen you saw but now."

"And she will become it rarely," answered Sigismund. "Were she but a score, or a score and a half years younger, she were a gallant wife for a Swiss landholder. I would warrant her to keep his household in high order."

"She will reward thee liberally for recovering her property," said Arthur, scarce suppressing a smile at the idea of the proud Margaret becoming the housewife of a Swiss shepherd.

"How—reward!" said the Swiss. "Bethink thee I am Sigismund Biederman, the son of the Landamman of Unterwalden—I am not a base *lanz-knecht*, to be paid for courtesy with piastres. Let her grant me a kind word of thanks, or the matter of a kiss, and I am well contented."

"A kiss of her hand, perhaps," said Arthur, again smiling at his friend's simplicity.

"Umph, the hand! Well! it may do for a Queen of some fifty years and odd, but would be poor homage to a Queen of May."

Arthur here brought back the youth to the subject of his battle, and learned that the slaugh-

ter of the Duke's forces in the flight had been in no degree equal to the importance of the action.

"Many rode off on horseback," said Sigismund; "and our German *reiters* flew on the spoil, when they should have followed the chase. And, besides, to speak truth, Charles's camp delayed our very selves in the pursuit; but had we gone half a mile further, and seen our friends hanging on trees, not a confederate would have stopped from the chase while he had limbs to carry him in pursuit."

"And what has become of the Duke?"

"Charles has retreated into Burgundy, like a boar who has felt a touch of the spear, and is more enraged than hurt; but is, they say, sad and sulky. Others report that he has collected all his scattered army, and immense forces besides, and has screwed his subjects to give him money, so that we may expect another brush. But all Switzerland will join us after such a victory."

"And my father is with him?" said Arthur.

"Truly he is, and has in a right godly man-

ner tried to set afoot a treaty of peace with my own father. But it will scarce succeed. Charles is as mad as ever; and our people are right proud of our victory, and so they well may. Nevertheless, my father for ever preaches that such victories, and such heaps of wealth, will change our ancient manners, and that the ploughman will leave his labour to turn soldier. He says much about it; but why money, choice meat and wine, and fine clothing, should do so much harm, I cannot bring my poor brains to see—And many better heads than mine are as much puzzled.—Here's to you, friend Arthur. —This is choice liquor!"

"And what brings you and your General, Prince Ferrand, post to Nancy?" said the young Englishman.

"Faith, you are yourself the cause of our journey."

"I the cause?" said Arthur.—"Why, how could that be?"

"Why, it is said you and Queen Margaret are urging this old fiddling King René to yield up his territories to Charles, and to disown Fer-

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rand in his claim upon Lorraine. And the Duke of Lorraine sent a man that you know well—that is, you do not know *him*, but you know some of his family, and he knows more of you than you wot—to put a spoke in your wheel, and prevent your getting for Charles the county of Provence, or preventing Ferrand being troubled or traversed in his natural rights over Lorraine."

"On my word, Sigismund, I cannot comprehend you," said Arthur.

"Well," replied the Swiss, "my lot is a hard one. All our house say that I can comprehend nothing, and I shall be next told that nobody can comprehend me.—Well, in plain language, I mean my uncle, Count Albert, as he calls himself, of Geierstein,—my father's brother."

"Anne of Geierstein's father!" echoed Arthur.

"Ay, truly, I thought we should find some mark to make you know him by."

"But I never saw him."

"Ay, but you have though—An able man he is, and knows more of every man's business

than the man does himself. Oh! it was not for nothing that he married the daughter of a Salamander!"

"Pshaw, Sigismund, how can you believe that nonsense?" answered Arthur.

"Rudolf told me you were as much bewildered as I was that night at Graffs-lust," answered the Swiss.

"If I were so, I was the greater ass for my pains," answered Arthur.

"Well, but this uncle of mine has got some of the old conjuring books from the library at Arnheim, and they say he can pass from place to place with more than mortal speed; and that he is helped in his designs by mightier counsellors than mere men. Always, however, though so able and highly-endowed, his gifts, whether coming from a lawful or unlawful quarter, bring him no abiding advantage. He is eternally plunged into strife and danger."

"I know few particulars of his life," said Arthur, disguising as much as he could his anxiety to hear more of him; "but I have heard that he left Switzerland to join the Emperor."

"True," answered the young Swiss, "and married the young Baroness of Arnheim,—but afterwards he incurred my namesake's imperial displeasure, and not less that of the Duke of Austria. They say you cannot live in Rome and strive with the Pope; so my uncle thought it best to cross the Rhine, and betake himself to Charles's court, who willingly received noblemen from all countries, so that they had good sounding names, with the title of Count, Marquis, Baron, or suchlike, to march in front of them. So my uncle was most kindly received; but within this year or two all this friendship has been broken up. Uncle Albert obtained a great lead in some mysterious societies, of which Charles disapproved, and set so hard at my poor uncle, that he was fain to take orders and shave his hair, rather than lose his head. But though he cut off his hair, his brain remains as busy as ever; and although the Duke suffered him to be at large, yet he found him so often in his way, that all men believed he waited but an excuse for seizing upon him and putting him to death. But my uncle

persists that he fears not Charles; and that, Duke as he is, Charles has more occasion to be afraid of him.—And so you saw how boldly he played his part at La Ferette."

"By Saint George of Windsor!" exclaimed Arthur, "the Black Priest of Saint Paul's?"

"Oh ho! you understand me now. Well, he took it upon him that Charles would not dare to punish him for his share in De Hagenbach's death; and no more did he, although uncle Albert sat and voted in the Estates of Burgundy, and stirred them up all he could to refuse giving Charles the money he asked of them. But when the Swiss war broke out, uncle Albert became assured his being a clergyman would be no longer his protection, and that the Duke intended to have him accused of corresponding with his brother and countrymen; and so he appeared suddenly in Ferrand's camp at Neufchatel, and sent a message to Charles that he renounced his allegiance, and bid him defiance."

"A singular story of an active and versatile man," said the young Englishman.

"Oh, you may seek the world for a man like uncle Albert. Then he knows every thing; and he told Duke Ferrand what you were about here, and offered to go and bring more certain information—ay, though he left the Swiss camp but five or six days before the battle, and the distance between Arles and Neufchatel be four hundred miles complete, yet we met him on his return, when Duke Ferrand, with me to show him the way, was hastening hitherward, having set off from the very field of battle."

"Met him!" said Arthur—"Met whom?—Met the Black Priest of Saint Paul's?"

"Ay, I mean so," replied Sigismund; "but he was habited as a Carmelite monk."

"A Carmelite!" said Arthur, a sudden light flashing on him; "and I was so blind as to recommend his services to the Queen! I remember well that he kept his face much concealed in his cowl—and I, foolish beast, to fall so grossly into the snare!—And yet perhaps it is as well the transaction was interrupted, since I fear, if carried successfully through, all must have been disconcerted by this astounding defeat."

Their conversation had thus far proceeded, when Mordaunt appearing, summoned Arthur to his royal mistress's apartment. In that gay palace, a gloomy room, whose windows looked upon some part of the ruins of the Roman edifice, but excluded every other object, save broken walls and tottering columns, was the retreat which Margaret had chosen for her own. She received Albert with a kindness, more touching that it was the inmate of so proud and fiery a disposition,—of a heart, assailed with many woes, and feeling them severely.

"Alas, poor Arthur!" she said, "thy life begins where thy father's threatens to end, in useless labour to save a sinking vessel. The rushing leak pours in its waters faster than human force can lighten or discharge. All—all goes wrong, when our unhappy cause becomes connected with it—Strength becomes weakness, wisdom folly, and valour cowardice. The Duke of Burgundy, hitherto victorious in all his bold undertakings, has but to entertain the momentary thought of yielding succour to Lancaster,

and behold his sword is broken by a peasant's flail; and his disciplined army, held to be the finest in the world, flies like chaff before the wind; while their spoils are divided by renegade German hirelings, and barbarous Alpine shepherds!—What more hast thou learned of this strange tale?"

"Little, madam, but what you have heard. The worst additions are, that the battle was shamefully cowardlike, and completely lost, with every advantage to have won it—the best, that the Burgundian army has been rather dispersed than destroyed, and that the Duke himself has escaped, and is rallying his forces in Upper Burgundy."

"To sustain a new defeat, or engage in a protracted and doubtful contest, fatal to his reputation as defeat itself. Where is thy father?"

"With the Duke, madam, as I have been informed," replied Arthur.

"Hie to him, and say I charge him to look after his own safety, and care no farther for my interests. This last blow has sunk me—I am

without an ally, without a friend, without treasure——"

"Not so, madam," replied Arthur. "One piece of good fortune has brought back to your Grace this inestimable relic of your fortunes." —And producing the precious necklace, he gave the history of its recovery.

"I rejoice at the chance which has restored these diamonds," said the Queen, "that in point of gratitude, at least, I may not be utterly bankrupt. Carry them to your father—tell him my schemes are over—and my heart, which so long clung to hope, is broken at last.—Tell him the trinkets are his own, and to his own use let him apply them. They will but poorly repay the noble earldom of Oxford, lost in the cause of her who sends them."

"Royal madam," said the youth, "be assured my father would sooner live by service as a *schwarz-reiter*, than become a burden on your misfortunes."

"He never yet disobeyed command of mine," said Margaret; "and this is the last I will lay upon him. If he is too rich or too proud to be-

nefit by his Queen's behest, he will find enough of poor Lancastrians who have fewer means or fewer scruples."

"There is yet a circumstance I have to communicate," said Arthur, and recounted the history of Albert of Geierstein, and the disguise of a Carmelite monk.

"Are you such a fool," answered the Queen, "as to suppose this man has any supernatural powers to aid him in his ambitious projects and his hasty journeys?"

"No, madam—but it is whispered that the Count Albert of Geierstein, or this Black Priest of Saint Paul's, is a chief amongst the Secret Societies of Germany, which even princes dread whilst they hate them; for the man that can command a hundred daggers, must be feared even by those who rule thousands of swords."

"Can this person," said the Queen, "being now a churchman, retain authority amongst those who deal in life and death? It is contrary to the canons."

"It would seem so, royal madam; but everything in these dark institutions differs from

what is practised in the light of day. Prelates are often heads of a Vehmique bench, and the Archbishop of Cologne exercises the dreadful office of their chief, as Duke of Westphalia, the principal region in which these Societies flourish.* Such privileges attach to the secret influence of the chiefs of this dark association, as may well seem supernatural to those who are unapprized of circumstances, of which men shun to speak in plain terms."

"Let him be wizard or assassin," said the Queen, "I thank him for having contributed to interrupt my plan of the old man's cession of Provence, which, as events stand, would have stripped René of his dominions, without furthering our plan of invading England.—Once

* The Archbishop of Cologne was recognised as head of all the Free Tribunals (*i. e.* the Vehmique benches) in Westphalia, by a writ of privilege granted in 1335, by the Emperor Charles IV. Winceslaus confirmed this act by a privilege dated 1382, in which the Archbishop is termed Grand Master of the Vehme, or Grand Inquisitor. And this prelate and other priests were encouraged to exercise such office, by Pope Boniface III., whose ecclesiastical discipline permitted them in such cases to assume the right of judging in matters of life and death.

more, be stirring with the dawn, and bend thy way back to thy father, and charge him to care for himself and think no more of me. Bretagne, where the heir of Lancaster resides, will be the safest place of refuge for its bravest followers. Along the Rhine, the Invisible Tribunal, it would seem, haunts both shores, and to be innocent of ill is no security; even here the proposed treaty with Burgundy may take air, and the Provençaux carry daggers as well as crooks and pipes. But I hear the horses fast returning from the hawking party, and the silly old man, forgetting all the eventful proceedings of the day, whistling as he ascends the steps. Well, we will soon part, and my removal will be, I think, a relief to him. Prepare for banquet and ball, for noise and nonsense—above all, to bid adieu to Aix with morning dawn."

Thus dismissed from the Queen's presence, Arthur's first care was to summon Thiebault to have all things in readiness for his departure; his next to prepare himself for the pleasures of the evening, not perhaps so heavily affected by the failure of his negotiation as to be incapable

of consolation in such a scene; for the truth was, that his mind secretly revolted at the thoughts of the simple old King being despoiled of his dominions to further an invasion of England, in which whatever interest he might have in his daughter's rights, there was little chance of success.

If such feelings were censurable they had their punishment. Although few knew how completely the arrival of the Duke of Lorraine, and the intelligence he brought with him, had disconcerted the plans of Queen Margaret, it was well known there had been little love betwixt the Queen and his mother Yolande; and the young Prince found himself at the head of a numerous party in the court of his grandfather, who disliked his aunt's haughty manners, and were wearied by the unceasing melancholy of her looks and conversation, and her undisguised contempt of the frivolities which passed around her. Ferrand, besides, was young, handsome, a victor just arrived from a field of battle, fought gloriously, and gained against all chances to the contrary. That

he was a general favourite, and excluded Arthur Philipson, as an adherent of the unpopular Queen, from the notice her influence had on a former evening procured him, was only a natural consequence of their relative condition. But what somewhat hurt Arthur's feelings was, to see his friend Sigismund the Simple, as his brethren called him, shining with the reflected glory of the Duke Ferrand of Lorraine, who presented to all the ladies present, the gallant young Swiss, as Count Sigismund of Geierstein. His care had procured for his follower a dress rather more suitable for such a scene than the country attire of the Count, otherwise Sigismund Biederman.

For a certain time, whatever of novelty is introduced into society is pleasing, though it has nothing else to recommend it. The Swiss were little known personally out of their own country, but they were much talked of; it was a recommendation to be of that country. Sigismund's manners were blunt; a mixture of awkwardness and rudeness, which was termed frankness during the moment of his favour.

He spoke bad French and worse Italian—it gave naiveté to all he said. His limbs were too bulky to be elegant; his dancing, for Count Sigismund failed not to dance, was the bounding and gamboling of a young elephant; yet they were preferred to the handsome proportions and courtly movements of the youthful Englishman, even by the black-eyed Countess, in whose good graces Arthur had made some progress on the preceding evening. Arthur thus thrown into the shade, felt as Mr Pepys afterwards did when he tore his camlet cloak,—the damage was not great, but it troubled him.

Nevertheless, the passing evening brought him some revenge. There are some works of art, the defects of which are not seen till they are injudiciously placed in too strong a light, and such was the case with Sigismund the Simple. The quick-witted, though fantastic Provençaux, soon found out the heaviness of his intellect, and the extent of his good-nature, and amused themselves at his expense, by ironical compliments and well-veiled raillery. It is probable they would have been less delicate on the sub-

ject, had not the Swiss brought into the dancing room along with him his eternal halbert, the size, and weight, and thickness of which boded little good to any one whom the owner might detect in the act of making merry at his expense. But Sigismund did no further mischief that night, except that, in achieving a superb *entrechat*, he alighted with his whole weight on the miniature foot of his pretty partner, which he wellnigh crushed to pieces.

Arthur had hitherto avoided looking towards Queen Margaret during the course of the evening, lest he should disturb her thoughts from the channel in which they were rolling, by seeming to lay a claim on her protection. But there was something so whimsical in the awkward physiognomy of the mal-adroit Swiss, and the pain and mortification of the suffering Provençale, that he could not help glancing an eye to the alcove where the Queen's chair of state was placed, to see if she noted either. The very first view was such as to rivet his attention. Margaret's head was reclined on the chair, her eyes scarcely open, her features drawn

up and pinched, her hands closed with effort. The English lady of honour who stood behind her—old, deaf, and dim-sighted—had not discovered any thing in her mistress's position, more than the abstracted and indifferent attitude with which the Queen was wont to be present in body and absent in mind, during the festivities of the Provençal court. But when Arthur, greatly alarmed, came behind the seat to press her attention to her mistress, she exclaimed, after a minute's investigation, "Mother of Heaven, the Queen is dead!" And it was so. It seemed that the last fibre of life, in that fiery and ambitious mind, had, as she herself prophesied, given way at the same time with the last thread of political hope.

CHAPTER X.

Toll, toll the bell!
Greatness is o'er,
The heart has broke,
To ache no more;
An unsubstantial pageant all—
Drop o'er the scene the funeral pall.

Old Poem.

The commotion and shrieks of fear and amazement which were excited among the ladies of the court by an event so singular and shocking, had begun to abate, and the sighs, more serious though less intrusive, of the few English attendants of the deceased Queen began to be heard, together with the groans of old King René, whose emotions were as acute as they were shortlived. The leeches had held a busy but unavailing consultation, and the body that was once a Queen's, was delivered to the Priest of St Sauveur, that beautiful church in which

the spoils of Pagan temples have contributed to fill up the magnificence of the Christian edifice. The stately pile was duly lighted up, and the funeral provided with such splendour as Aix could supply. The Queen's papers being examined, it was found, that Margaret, by disposing of jewels and living at small expense, had realized the means of making a decent provision for life, for her very few English attendants. Her diamond necklace, described in her last will as in the hands of an English merchant named John Philipson, or his son, or the price thereof, if by them sold or pledged, she left to the said John Philipson and his son Arthur Philipson, with a view to the prosecution of the design which they had been destined to advance, or, if that should prove impossible, to their own use and profit. The charge of her funeral rites was wholly intrusted to Arthur, called Philipson, with a request that they should be conducted entirely after the forms observed in England. This trust was expressed in an addition to her will, signed the very day on which she died.

Arthur lost no time in dispatching Thiebault

express to his father, with a letter, explaining in such terms as he knew would be understood, the tenor of all that had happened since he came to Aix, and above all, the death of Queen Margaret. Finally, he requested directions for his motions, since the necessary delay occupied by the obsequies of a person of such eminent rank must detain him at Aix till he should receive them.

The old King sustained the shock of his daughter's death so easily, that, on the second day after the event, he was engaged in arranging a pompous procession for the funeral, and composing an elegy, to be sung to a tune also of his own composing, in honour of the deceased Queen, who was likened to the goddesses of heathen mythology, and to Judith, Deborah, and all the other holy women, not to mention the saints of the Christian dispensation. It cannot be concealed, that when the first burst of grief was over, King René could not help feeling that Margaret's death cut a political knot which he might have otherwise found it difficult to untie, and permitted him to take open

part with his grandson, so far indeed as to afford him a considerable share of the contents of the Provençal treasury, which amounted to no larger sum than ten thousand crowns. Ferrand having received the blessing of his grandfather, in a form which his affairs rendered most important to him, returned to the resolutes whom he commanded; and with him, after a most loving farewell to Arthur, went the stout but simple-minded young Swiss, Sigismund Biederman.

The little court of Aix were left to their mourning. King René, for whom ceremonial and show, whether of a joyful or melancholy character, was always matter of importance, would willingly have bestowed on solemnizing the obsequies of his daughter Margaret what remained of his revenue, but was prevented from doing so, partly by remonstrances from his ministers, partly by the obstacles opposed by the young Englishman, who, acting upon the presumed will of the dead, interfered to prevent any such fantastic exhibitions being ex-

hibited at the obsequies of the Queen, as had disgusted her during her life.

The funeral, therefore, after many days had been spent in public prayers, and acts of devotion, was solemnized with the mournful magnificence due to the birth of the deceased, and with which the church of Rome so well knows how to affect at once the eye, ear, and feelings.

Amid the various nobles who assisted on the solemn occasion, there was one who arrived just as the tolling of the great bells of St Sauveur had announced that the procession was already on its way to the Cathedral. The stranger hastily exchanged his travelling dress for a suit of deep mourning, which was made after the fashion proper to England. So attired, he repaired to the Cathedral, where the noble mien of the cavalier imposed such respect on the attendants, that he was permitted to approach close to the side of the bier; and it was across the coffin of the Queen for whom he had acted and suffered so much, that the gallant Earl of Oxford exchanged a melancholy glance with

his son. The assistants, especially the English servants of Margaret, gazed on them both with respect and wonder, and the elder cavalier, in particular, seemed to them no unapt representative of the faithful subjects of England, paying their last duty at the tomb of her who had so long swayed the sceptre, if not faultlessly, yet always with a bold and resolved hand.

The last sound of the solemn dirge had died away, and almost all the funeral attendants had retired, when the father and son still lingered in mournful silence beside the remains of their Sovereign. The clergy at length approached, and intimated they were about to conclude the last duties, by removing the body which had been lately occupied and animated by so haughty and restless a spirit, to the dust, darkness, and silence of the vault, where the long-descended Counts of Provence awaited dissolution. Six priests raised the bier on their shoulders, others bore huge waxen torches before and behind the body, as they carried it down a private staircase which yawned in the floor to admit their descent. The last notes of the re-

quiem, in which the churchmen joined, had died away along the high and fretted arches of the Cathedral, the last flash of light which arose from the mouth of the vault had glimmered and disappeared, when the Earl of Oxford, taking his son by the arm, led him in silence forth into a small cloistered court behind the building, where they found themselves alone. They were silent for a few minutes, for both, and particularly the father, were deeply affected. At length the Earl spoke.

"And this, then, is her end," said he. "Here, royal lady, all that we have planned and pledged life upon falls to pieces with thy dissolution! The heart of resolution, the head of policy, is gone; and what avails it that the limbs of the enterprise still have motion and life? Alas, Margaret of Anjou! may Heaven reward thy virtues, and absolve thee from the consequence of thine errors! Both belonged to thy station, and if thou didst hoist too high a sail in prosperity, never lived there princess who defied more proudly the storms of adver-

sity, or bore up against them with such dauntless nobility of determination. With this event the drama has closed, and our parts, my son, are ended."

"We bear arms, then, against the infidels, my lord," said Arthur, with a sigh that was, however, hardly audible.

"Not," answered the Earl, "until I learn that Henry of Richmond, the undoubted heir of the house of Lancaster, has no occasion for my services. In these jewels, of which you wrote me, so strangely lost and recovered, I may be able to supply him with resources more needful than either your services or mine. But I return no more to the camp of the Duke of Burgundy; for in him there is no help."

"Can it be possible that the power of so great a sovereign has been overthrown in one fatal battle?" said Arthur.

"By no means," replied his father. "The loss at Granson was very great; but to the strength of Burgundy it is but a scratch on the shoulders of a giant. It is the spirit of Charles

himself, his wisdom at least, and his foresight, which have given way under the mortification of a defeat, by such as he accounted inconsiderable enemies, and expected to have trampled down with a few squadrons of his men-at-arms. Then his temper is become froward, peevish, and arbitrary, devoted to those who flatter, and, as there is too much reason to believe, betray him; and suspicious of those councillors who give him wholesome advice. Even I have had my share of distrust. Thou knowest I refused to bear arms against our late hosts the Swiss; and he saw in that no reason for rejecting my attendance on his march. But since the defeat of Granson, I have observed a strong and sudden change, owing, perhaps, in some degree to the insinuations of Campo-Basso, and not a little to the injured pride of the Duke, who was unwilling that an indifferent person in my situation, and thinking as I do, should witness the disgrace of his arms. He spoke in my hearing of lukewarm friends, cold-blooded neutrals,—of those who,

not being with him, must be against him. I tell thee, Arthur de Vere, the Duke has said that which touched my honour so nearly, that nothing but the commands of Queen Margaret, and the interests of the House of Lancaster, could have made me remain in his camp. That is over—My royal mistress has no more occasion for my poor services—the Duke can spare no aid to our cause—and if he could, we can no longer dispose of the only bribe which might have induced him to afford us succours. The power of seconding his views on Provence is buried with Margaret of Anjou."

"What, then, is your purpose?" demanded his son.

"I propose," said Oxford, "to wait at the court of King René until I can hear from the Earl of Richmond, as we must still call him. I am aware that banished men are rarely welcome at the court of a foreign prince; but I have been the faithful follower of his daughter Margaret. I only propose to reside in disguise, and desire neither notice nor maintenance; so methinks

King René will not refuse to permit me to breathe the air of his dominions, until I learn in what direction fortune or duty shall call me."

"Be assured he will not," answered Arthur. "René is incapable of a base or ignoble thought; and if he could despise trifles as he detests dishonour, he might be ranked high in the list of monarchs."

This resolution being adopted, the son presented his father at King René's court, whom he privately made acquainted that he was a man of quality, and a distinguished Lancastrian. The good King would in his heart have preferred a guest of lighter accomplishments, and gayer temper, to Oxford, a statesman and a soldier of melancholy and grave habits. The Earl was conscious of this, and seldom troubled his benevolent and light-hearted host with his presence. He had, however, an opportunity of rendering the old King a favour of peculiar value. This was in conducting an important treaty betwixt René and Louis XI. of France, his nephew. Upon that crafty monarch, René finally settled

his principality, for the necessity of extricating his affairs by such a measure was now apparent even to himself, every thought of favouring Charles of Burgundy in the arrangement having died with Queen Margaret. The policy and wisdom of the English Earl, who was intrusted with almost the sole charge of this secret and delicate measure, were of the utmost advantage to good King René, who was freed from personal and pecuniary vexations, and enabled to go piping and tabouring to his grave. Louis did not fail to propitiate the plenipotentiary, by throwing out distant hopes of aid to the efforts of the Lancastrian party in England. A faint and insecure negotiation was entered into upon the subject; and these affairs, which rendered two journeys to Paris necessary on the part of Oxford and his son, in the spring and summer of the year 1476, occupied them until that year was half spent.

In the meanwhile, the wars of the Duke of Burgundy with the Swiss Cantons and Count Ferrand of Lorraine, continued to rage. Before

midsummer, 1376, Charles had assembled a new army of at least sixty thousand men, supported by one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, for the purpose of invading Switzerland, where the warlike mountaineers easily levied a host of thirty thousand Switzers, now accounted almost invincible, and called upon their confederates, the Free Cities on the Rhine, to support them with a powerful body of cavalry. The first efforts of Charles were successful. He overran the Pays de Vaud, and recovered most of the places which he had lost after the defeat at Granson. But instead of attempting to secure a well-defended frontier, or, what would have been still more politic, to achieve a peace upon equitable terms with his redoubtable neighbours, this most obstinate of princes resumed the purpose of penetrating into the recesses of the Alpine mountains, and chastising the mountaineers even within their own strongholds, though experience might have taught him the danger, nay, desperation of the attempt. Thus the news received by Oxford and his son, when they re-

turned to Aix in midsummer, was, that Duke Charles had advanced to Morat, (or Murten,) situated upon a lake of the same name, at the very entrance of Switzerland. Here report said, that Adrian de Bubenberg, a veteran knight of Berne, commanded, and maintained the most obstinate defence, in expectation of the relief which his countrymen were hastily assembling.

"Alas, my old brother-in-arms!" said the Earl to his son, on hearing these tidings, "this town besieged, these assaults repelled, this vicinity of an enemy's country, this profound lake, these inaccessible cliffs, threaten a second part of the tragedy of Granson, more calamitous perhaps than even the former!"

On the last week of July, the capital of Provence was agitated by one of those unauthorized, yet generally received rumours, which transmit great events with incredible swiftness, as an apple flung from hand to hand by a number of people will pass a given space infinitely faster than if borne by the most rapid series of expresses. The report announced a second de-

feat of the Burgundians, in terms so exaggerated, as induced the Earl of Oxford to consider the greater part, if not the whole, as a fabrication.

CHAPTER XI.

And is the hostile troop arrived,
And have they won the day?
It must have been a bloody field
Ere Darwent fled away.
The Ettrick Shepherd.

SLEEP did not close the eyes of the Earl of Oxford or his son; for although the success or defeat of the Duke of Burgundy could not now be of importance to their own private or political affairs, yet the father did not cease to interest himself in the fate of his former companion in arms; and the son, with the fire of youth, always eager after novelty,* expected to find something to advance or thwart his own progress in every remarkable event which agitated the world.

* Cupidus novarum rerum.

Arthur had risen from his bed, and was in the act of attiring himself, when the tread of a horse arrested his attention. He had no sooner looked out of the window, than exclaiming, "News, my father, news from the army!" he rushed into the street, where a cavalier, who appeared to have ridden very hard, was enquiring for the two Philipsons, father and son. He had no difficulty in recognising Colvin, the master of the Burgundian ordnance. His ghastly look, bespoke distress of mind; his disordered array and broken armour, which seemed rusted with rain, or stained with blood, gave the intelligence of some affray in which he had probably been worsted; and so exhausted was his gallant steed, that it was with difficulty the animal could stand upright. The condition of the rider was not much better. When he alighted from his horse to greet Arthur, he reeled so much that he would have fallen without instant support. His horny eye had lost the power of speculation; his limbs possessed imperfectly that of motion, and it was with a half

suffocated voice that he muttered, " Only fatigue—want of rest and of food."

Arthur assisted him into the house, and refreshments were procured; but he refused all except a bowl of wine, after tasting which he set it down, and looking at the Earl of Oxford with an eye of the deepest affliction, he ejaculated, " The Duke of Burgundy!"

" Slain?" replied the Earl; " I trust not!"

" It might have been better if he were," said the Englishman; " but dishonour has come before death."

" Defeated, then?" said Oxford.

" So completely and fearfully defeated," answered the soldier, " that all that I have seen of loss before was slight in comparison."

" But how, or where?" said the Earl of Oxford; " you were superior in numbers, as we were informed."

" Two to one at least," answered Colvin; " and when I speak of our encounter at this moment, I could rend my flesh with my teeth for being here to tell such a tale of shame. We

had sat down for about a week before that paltry town of Murten, or Morat, or whatever it is called. The governor, one of those stubborn mountain bears of Berne, bade us defiance. He would not even condescend to shut his gates, but when we summoned the town, returned for answer, we might enter if we pleased,—we should be suitably received. I would have tried to bring him to reason by a salvo or two of artillery, but the Duke was too much irritated to listen to good counsel. Stimulated by that black traitor, Campo-basso, he deemed it better to run forward with his whole force upon a place, which, though I could soon have battered it about their German ears, was yet too strong to be carried by swords, lances, and hagbuts. We were beaten off with great loss, and much discouragement to the soldiers. We then commenced more regularly, and my batteries would have brought these mad Switzers to their senses. Walls and ramparts went down before the lusty cannoneers of Burgundy; we were well secured also by entrenchments against those whom we heard of as approaching to

raise the siege. But on the evening of the twentieth of this month, we learned that they were close at hand, and Charles, consulting only his own bold spirit, advanced to meet them, relinquishing the advantage of our batteries and strong position. By his orders, though against my own judgment, I accompanied him with twenty good pieces, and the flower of my people. We broke up on the next morning, and had not advanced far before we saw the lances and thick array of halberts and two-handed swords which crested the mountain. Heaven, too, added its terrors—a thunder-storm, with all the fury of those tempestuous climates, descended on both armies, but did most annoyance to ours, as our troops, especially the Italians, were more sensible to the torrents of rain which poured down, and the rivulets which, swelled into torrents, inundated and disordered our position. The Duke for once saw it necessary to alter his purpose of instant battle. He rode up to me, and directed me to defend with the cannon the retreat which he was about to commence, add-

ing, that he himself would in person sustain me with the men-at-arms. The order was given to retreat. But the movement gave new spirit to an enemy already sufficiently audacious. The ranks of the Swiss instantly prostrated themselves in prayer—a practice on the field of battle which I have ridiculed—but I will do so no more. When, after five minutes, they sprung again on their feet, and began to advance rapidly, sounding their horns and crying their war cries with all their usual ferocity—behold, my lord, the clouds of heaven opened, shedding on the confederates the blessed light of the returning sun, while our ranks were still in the gloom of the tempest. My men were discouraged. The host behind them was retreating; the sudden light thrown on the advancing Switzers showed along the mountains a profusion of banners, a glancing of arms, giving to the enemy the appearance of double the numbers that had hitherto been visible to us. I exhorted my followers to stand fast, but in doing so I thought a thought, and spoke a word,

which was a grievous sin. 'Stand fast, my brave cannoneers,' I said, 'we will presently let them hear louder thunders, and show them more fatal lightnings, than their prayers have put down!'—My men shouted—But it was an impious thought—a blasphemous speech—and evil came after it. We levelled our guns on the advancing masses as fairly as cannon were ever pointed—I can vouch it, for I laid the Grand Duchess of Burgundy myself—Ah, poor Duchess! what rude hands manage thee now!—The volley was fired, and ere the smoke spread from the muzzles, I could see many a man, and many a banner, go down. It was natural to think such a discharge should have checked the attack, and whilst the smoke hid the enemy from us, I made every effort again to load our cannon, and anxiously endeavoured to look through the mist to discover the state of our opponents. But ere our smoke was cleared away, or the cannon again loaded, they came headlong down on us, horse and foot, old men and boys, men-at-arms and varlets, charging up to the muzzle of the guns, and over them, with total disregard to their lives.

My brave fellows were cut down, pierced through, and overrun, while they were again loading their pieces, nor do I believe that a single cannon was fired a second time."

"And the Duke?" said the Earl of Oxford, "did he not support you?"

"Most loyally and bravely," answered Colvin, "with his own body guard of Walloons and Burgundians. But a thousand Italian mercenaries went off, and never showed face again. The pass, too, was cumbered with the artillery, and in itself narrow, bordering on mountains and cliffs, a deep lake close beside. In short, it was a place totally unfit for horsemen to act in. In spite of the Duke's utmost exertions, and those of the gallant Flemings who fought around him, all were borne back in complete disorder. I was on foot, fighting as I could, without hopes of my life, or indeed thoughts of saving it, when I saw the guns taken and my faithful cannoneers slain. But I saw Duke Charles hard pressed, and took my horse from my page that held him—Thou, too, art lost, my poor orphan boy!—I could only aid Mon-

seigneur de la Croye and others to extricate the Duke. Our retreat became a total rout, and when we reached our rear-guard, which we had left strongly encamped, the banners of the Switzers were waving on our batteries, for a large division had made a circuit through mountain passes known only to themselves, and attacked our camp, vigorously seconded by that accursed Adrian de Bubenburg, who sallied from the beleaguered town, so that our entrenchments were stormed on both sides at once.—I have more to say, but having ridden day and night to bring you these evil tidings, my tongue clings to the roof of my mouth, and I feel that I can speak no more. The rest is all flight and massacre, disgraceful to every soldier that shared in it. For my part, I confess my contumelious self-confidence and insolence to man, as well as blasphemy to Heaven. If I live, it is but to hide my disgraced head in a cowl, and expiate the numerous sins of a licentious life."

With difficulty the broken-minded soldier was prevailed upon to take some nourishment and repose, together with an opiate, which was

prescribed by the physician of King René, who recommended it as necessary to preserve even the reason of his patient, exhausted by the events of the battle, and subsequent fatigue.

The Earl of Oxford, dismissing other assistance, watched alternately with his son at Colvin's bedside. Notwithstanding the draught that had been administered, his repose was far from sound. Sudden starts, the perspiration which started from his brow, the distortions of his countenance, and the manner in which he clenched his fists and flung about his limbs, showed that in his dreams he was again encountering the terrors of a desperate and forlorn combat. This lasted for several hours; but about noon fatigue and medicine prevailed over nervous excitation, and the defeated commander fell into a deep and untroubled repose till evening. About sunset he awakened, and, after learning with whom and where he was, he partook of refreshments, and without any apparent consciousness of having told them before, detailed once more all the particulars of the battle of Murten.

"It were little wide of truth," he said, "to calculate, that one half of the Duke's army fell by the sword, or were driven into the lake. Those who escaped are great part of them scattered, never again to unite. Such a desperate and irretrievable rout was never witnessed. We fled like deer, sheep, or any other timid animals, which only remain in company because they are afraid to separate, but never think of order or of defence."

"And the Duke?" said the Earl of Oxford.

"We hurried him with us," said the soldier, "rather from instinct than loyalty, as men flying from a conflagration snatch up what they have of value, without knowing what they are doing. Knight and knave, officer and soldier, fled in the same panic, and each blast of the horn of Uri in our rear added new wings to our flight."

"And the Duke?" repeated Oxford.

"At first he resisted our efforts, and strove to turn back on the foe; but when the flight became general, he galloped along with us, with-

out a word spoken or a command issued. At first we thought his silence and passiveness, so unusual in a temper so fiery, were fortunate for securing his personal safety. But when we rode the whole day, without being able to obtain a word of reply to all our questions,—when he sternly refused refreshments of every kind, though he had tasted no food all that disastrous day,—when every variation of his moody and uncertain temper was sunk into silent and sullen despair, we took counsel what was to be done, and it was by the general voice that I was dispatched to entreat that you, for whose counsels alone Charles has been known to have had some occasional deference, would come instantly to his place of retreat, and exert all your influence to awaken him from this lethargy, which may otherwise terminate his existence."

"And what remedy can I interpose?" said Oxford. "You know how he neglected my advice, when following it might have served my interest as well as his own. You are aware that my life was not safe among the miscreants that

surrounded the Duke, and exercised influence over him."

"Most true," answered Colvin; "but I also know he is your ancient companion-in-arms, and it would ill become me to teach the noble Earl of Oxford what the laws of chivalry require. For your lordship's safety, every honest man in the army will give willing security."

"It is for that I care least," said Oxford, indifferently; "and if indeed my presence can be of service to the Duke,—if I could believe that he desired it"——

"He does—he does, my lord!" said the faithful soldier, with tears in his eyes. "We heard him name your name, as if the words escaped him in a painful dream."

"I will go to him, such being the case," said Oxford.—"I will go instantly. Where did he purpose to establish his head-quarters?"

"He had fixed nothing for himself on that or other matters; but Monsieur de Contay named La Riviere, near Salins, in Upper Burgundy, as the place of his retreat."

"Thither, then, will we, my son, with all haste of preparation. Thou, Colvin, hadst better remain here, and see some holy man, to be assoilzied for thy hasty speech on the battle-field of Morat. There was offence in it without doubt, but it will be ill atoned for by quitting a generous master when he hath most need of your good service; and it is but an act of cowardice to retreat into the cloister, till we have no longer active duties to perform in this world."

"It is true," said Colvin, "that should I leave the Duke now, perhaps not a man would stay behind that could stell a cannon properly. The sight of your lordship cannot but operate favourably on my noble master, since it has waked the old soldier in myself. If your lordship can delay your journey till to-morrow, I will have my spiritual affairs settled, and my bodily health sufficiently restored, to be your guide to La Riviere; and, for the cloister, I will think of it when I have regained the good name which I have lost at Murten. But I will have masses said, and these right powerful, for the souls of my poor cannoneers."

The proposal of Colvin was adopted, and Oxford, with his son, attended by Thiebault, spent the day in preparation, excepting the time necessary to take formal leave of King René, who seemed to part with them with regret. In company with the ordnance officer of the discomfited Duke, they traversed those parts of Provence, Dauphiné, and Franche Compte, which lie between Aix and the place to which the Duke of Burgundy had retreated; but the distance and inconvenience of so long a route consumed more than a fortnight on the road, and the month of July 1466 was commenced, when the travellers arrived in Upper Burgundy, and at the Castle of La Riviere, about twenty miles to the south of the town of Salins. The castle, which was but of small size, was surrounded by very many tents, which were pitched in a crowded, disordered, and unsoldierlike manner, very unlike the discipline usually observed in the camp of Charles the Bold. That the Duke was present there, however, was attested by his broad banner, which, rich with all its quarterings, streamed

from the battlements of the castle. The guard turned out to receive the strangers, but in a manner so disorderly, that the Earl looked to Colvin for explanation. The master of the ordnance shrugged up his shoulders, and was silent.

Colvin having sent in notice of his arrival, and that of the English Earl, Monsieur de Contay caused them presently to be admitted, and expressed much joy at their arrival.

"A few of us," he said, "true servants of the Duke, are holding council here, at which your assistance, my noble Lord of Oxford, will be of the utmost importance. Messieurs De la Croye, De Craon, Rubempré, and others, nobles of Burgundy, are now assembled to superintend the defence of the country at this exigence."

They all expressed delight to see the Earl of Oxford, and had only abstained from thrusting their attentions on him the last time he was in the Duke's camp, as they understood it was his wish to observe incognito.

"His Grace," said De Craon, "has asked

after you twice, and on both times by your assumed name of Philipson."

"I wonder not at that, my Lord of Craon," replied the English nobleman; "the origin of the name took its rise in former days, when I was here during my first exile. It was then said, that we poor Lancastrian nobles must assume other names than our own, and the good Duke Philip said, as I was brother-in-arms to his son Charles, I must be called after himself, by the name of Philipson. In memory of the good sovereign, I took that name when the day of need actually arrived, and I see that the Duke thinks of our early intimacy by his distinguishing me so.—How fares his Grace?"

The Burgundians looked at each other, and there was a pause.

"Even like a man stunned, brave Oxford," at length De Contay replied. "Sieur d'Argentin, you can best inform the noble Earl of the condition of our sovereign."

"He is like a man distracted," said the future historian of that busy period. "After the battle of Granson, he was never, to my think-

ing, of the same sound judgment as before. But then, he was capricious, unreasonable, peremptory, and inconsistent, and resented every counsel that was offered, as if it had been meant in insult; was jealous of the least trespass in point of ceremonial, as if his subjects were holding him in contempt. Now there is a total change, as if this second blow had stunned him, and suppressed the violent passions which the first called into action. He is silent as a Carthusian, solitary as a hermit, expresses interest in nothing, least of all in the guidance of his army. He was, you know, anxious about his dress; so much so, that there was some affectation even in the rudenesses which he practised in that matter. But, woe's me, you will see a change now; he will not suffer his hair or nails to be trimmed or arranged. He is totally heedless of respect or disrespect towards him, takes little or no nourishment, and uses strong wines, which, however, do not seem to affect his understanding; he will hear nothing of war or state affairs, as little of hunting or of sport. Suppose an anchorite brought from a cell to govern a king-

dom, you see in him, except in point of devotion, a picture of the fiery active Charles of Burgundy."

"You speak of a mind deeply wounded, Sieur d'Argentin," replied the Englishman. "Think you it fit I should present myself before the Duke?"

"I will enquire," said Contay; and leaving the apartment, returned presently, and made a sign to the Earl to follow him.

In a cabinet, or closet, the unfortunate Charles reclined in a large arm-chair, his legs carelessly stretched on a footstool, but so changed that the Earl of Oxford could have believed what he saw to be the ghost of the once fiery Duke. Indeed, the shaggy length of hair which, streaming from his head, mingled with his beard; the hollowness of the caverns, at the bottom of which rolled his wild eyes; the falling in of the breast, and the advance of the shoulders, gave the ghastly appearance of one who has suffered the final agony which takes from mortality the signs of life and energy. His very costume (a cloak flung

loosely over him) increased his resemblance to a shrouded phantom. De Contay named the Earl of Oxford; but the Duke gazed on him with a lustreless eye, and gave him no answer.

"Speak to him, brave Oxford," said the Burgundian in a whisper; "he is even worse than usual, but perhaps he may know your voice."

Never, when the Duke of Burgundy was in the most palmy state of his fortunes, did the noble Englishman kneel to kiss his hand with such sincere reverence. He respected in him, not only the afflicted friend, but the humbled sovereign, upon whose tower of trust the lightning had so recently broken. It was probably the falling of a tear upon his hand which seemed to awake the Duke's attention, for he looked towards the Earl, and said, "Oxford—Philipson—my old—my only friend, hast thou found me out in this retreat of shame and misery?"

"I am not your only friend, my lord," said Oxford. "Heaven has given you many affectionate friends among your natural and loyal subjects. But though a stranger, and saving

the allegiance I owe to my lawful sovereign, I will yield to none of them in the respect and deference which I have paid to your Grace in prosperity, and now come to render to you in adversity."

"Adversity indeed," said the Duke; "irremediable intolerable adversity! I was lately Charles of Burgundy, called the Bold—now am I twice beaten by a scum of German peasants; my standard taken, my men-at-arms put to flight, my camp twice plundered, and each time of value more than equal to the price of all Switzerland fairly lost; myself hunted like a caitiff goat or chamois—The utmost spite of hell could never accumulate more shame on the head of a sovereign!"

"On the contrary, my lord," said Oxford, "it is a trial of Heaven, which calls for patience and strength of mind. The bravest and best knight may lose the saddle; he is but a laggard who lies rolling on the sand of the lists after the accident has chanced."

"Ha, laggard, sayst thou?" said the Duke, some part of his ancient spirit awakened by the

broad taunt, "Leave my presence, sir, and return to it no more, till you are summoned thither.—"

"Which I trust will be no later than your Grace quits your dishabille, and disposes yourself to see your vassals and friends with such ceremony as befits you and them," said the Earl composedly.

"How mean you by that, Sir Earl? You are unmannerly."

"If I be, my lord, I am taught my ill breeding by circumstances. I can mourn over fallen dignity; but I cannot honour him who dishonours himself, by bending, like a regardless boy, beneath the scourge of evil fortune."

"And who am I that you should term me such?" said Charles, starting up in all his natural pride and ferocity; "or who are you but a miserable exile, that you should break in upon my privacy with such disrespectful upbraiding?"

"For me," replied Oxford, "I am, as you say, an unrespected exile; nor am I ashamed of my condition, since unshaken loyalty to my

King and his successors has brought me to it. But in you, can I recognise the Duke of Burgundy in a sullen hermit, whose guards are a disorderly soldiery, dreadful only to their friends; whose councils are in confusion for want of their sovereign, and who himself lurks, like a lamed wolf in its den, in an obscure castle, waiting but a blast of the Switzer's horn to fling open its gates, which there are none to defend; who wears not a knightly sword to protect his person, and cannot even die like a stag at bay, but must be worried like a hunted fox?"

"Death and hell, slanderous traitor!" thundered the Duke, glancing a look at his side, and perceiving himself without a weapon,—"It is well for thee I have no sword, or thou shouldst never boast of thine insolence going unpunished.—Contay, step forth like a good knight, and confute the calumniator. Say, are not my soldiers arrayed, disciplined, and in order?"

"My lord," said Contay, trembling (brave as he was in battle) at the frantic rage which

Charles exhibited, "there are a numerous soldiery yet under your command, but they are in evil order, and worse disciplined, I think, than they were wont."

"I see it—I see it," said the Duke; "idle and evil counsellors are ye all.—Hearken, Sir of Contay, what have you and the rest of you been doing, holding as you do large lands and high fiefs of us, that I cannot stretch my limbs on a sick-bed, when my heart is half broken, but my troops must fall into such scandalous disorder as exposes me to the scorn and reproach of each beggarly foreigner?"

"My lord," replied Contay, more firmly, "we have done what we could. But your Grace has accustomed your mercenary generals, and leaders of Free Companies, to take their orders only from your own mouth, or hand. They clamour also for pay, and the treasurer refuses to issue it without your Grace's order, as he alleges it might cost him his head; and they will not be guided and restrained either by us, or those who compose your council."

The Duke laughed sternly, but was evidently somewhat pleased with the reply.

"Ha, ha!" he said, "it is only Burgundy who can ride his own wild horses, and rule his own wild soldiery. Hark thee, Contay—To-morrow I ride forth to review the troops—for what disorder has passed, allowance shall be made. Pay also shall be issued—but woe to those who shall have offended too deeply! Let my grooms of the chamber know to provide me fitting dress and arms. I have got a lesson, (glancing a dark look at Oxford,) and I will not again be insulted without the means of wreaking my vengeance. Begone, both of you. And, Contay, send the treasurer hither with his accounts, and woe to his soul if I find aught to complain of! Begone, I say, and send him hither."

They left the apartment with suitable obeisance. As they retired, the Duke said, abruptly, "Lord of Oxford, a word with you. Where did you study medicine? In your own famed university, I suppose. Thy physic hath wrought

a wonder. Yet, Doctor Philipson, it might have cost thee thy life."

"I have ever thought my life cheap," said Oxford, "when the object was to help my friend."

"Thou art indeed a friend," said Charles, "and a fearless one. But go—I have been sore troubled, and thou hast tasked my temper closely. To-morrow we will speak further; meantime, I forgive thee, and I honour thee."

The Earl of Oxford retired to the Council-hall, where the Burgundian nobility, aware of what had passed, crowded around him with thanks, compliments, and congratulations. A general bustle now ensued; orders were hurried off in every direction. Those officers who had duties to perform which had been neglected, hastened to conceal or to atone for their negligence. There was a general tumult in the camp, but it was a tumult of joy; for soldiers are always most pleased when they are best in order for performing their military service, and license or inactivity, however acceptable at times, are not, when continued, so agreeable to their na-

ture as strict discipline and a prospect of employment.

The treasurer, who was, luckily for him, a man of sense and method, having been two hours in private with the Duke, returned with looks of wonder, and professed, that never, in Charles's most prosperous days, had he showed himself more acute in the department of finance, of which he had but that morning seemed totally incapable; and the merit was universally attributed to the visit of Lord Oxford, whose timely reprimand had, like the shot of a cannon dispersing foul mists, awakened the Duke from his black and bilious melancholy.

On the following day, Charles reviewed his troops with his usual attention, directed new levies, made various dispositions of his forces, and corrected the faults of their discipline by severe orders, which were enforced by some deserved punishments, (of which the Italian mercenaries of Campo-Basso had a large share,) and rendered palatable by the payment of arrears, which was calculated to attach them to the standard under which they served.

The Duke also, after consulting with his council, agreed to convoke meetings of the States in his different territories, redress certain popular grievances, and grant some boons which he had hitherto denied; and thus began to open a new account of popularity with his subjects, in place of that which his rashness had exhausted.

CHAPTER XII.

——— Here's a weapon now,
Shall shake a conquering general in his tent,
A monarch on his throne, or reach a prelate,
However holy be his offices,
E'en while he serves the altar.

Old Play.

From this time all was activity in the Duke of Burgundy's court and army. Money was collected, soldiers were levied, and certain news of the Confederates' motions only were wanting to bring on the campaign. But although Charles was, to all outward appearance, as active as ever, yet those who were more immediately about his person were of opinion that he did not display the soundness of mind, or the energy of judgment, which had been admired in him before these calamities. He was still liable

to fits of moody melancholy, similar to those which descended upon Saul, and was vehemently furious when aroused out of them. Indeed, the Earl of Oxford himself seemed to have lost the power which he had exercised over him at first. Nay, though in general Charles was both grateful and affectionate towards him, he evidently felt humbled by the recollection of his having witnessed his impotent and disastrous condition, and was so much afraid of Lord Oxford being supposed to lead his counsels, that he often repelled his advice, merely, as it seemed, to show his own independence of mind.

In these froward humours, the Duke was much encouraged by Campo-Basso. That wily traitor now saw his master's affairs tottering to their fall, and he resolved to lend his lever to the work, so as to entitle him to a share of the spoil. He regarded Oxford as one of the most able friends and counsellors who adhered to the Duke; he thought he saw in his looks that he fathomed his own treacherous purpose, and therefore he hated and feared him. Besides, in order perhaps to colour over, even to his

own eyes, the abominable perfidy he meditated, he affected to be exceedingly enraged against the Duke for the late punishment of marauders belonging to his Italian bands. He believed that chastisement to have been inflicted by the advice of Oxford; and he suspected that the measure was pressed with the hope of discovering that the Italians had not pillaged for their own emolument only, but for that of their commander. Believing that Oxford was thus hostile to him, Campo-Basso would have speedily found means to take him out of his path, had not the Earl himself found it prudent to observe some precautions; and the lords of Flanders and Burgundy, who loved him for the very reasons for which the Italian abhorred him, watched over his safety with a vigilance, of which he himself was ignorant, but which certainly was the means of preserving his life.

It was not to be supposed that Ferrand of Lorraine should have left his victory so long unimproved; but the Swiss confederates, who were the strength of his forces, insisted that the first operations should take place in Savoy

and the Pays de Vaud, where the Burgundians had many garrisons, which, though they received no relief, yet were not easily or speedily reduced. Besides, the Switzers being, like most of the national soldiers of the time, a kind of militia, most of them returned home, to get in their harvest, and to deposit their spoil in safety. Ferrand, therefore, though bent on pursuing his success with all the ardour of youthful chivalry, was prevented from making any movement in advance until the month of December 1466. In the meantime, the Duke of Burgundy's forces, to be least burdensome to the country, were cantoned in distant places of his dominions, where every exertion was made to perfect the discipline of the new levies. The Duke, if left to himself, would have precipitated the struggle by again assembling his forces, and pushing forward into the Helvetian territories. But though he inwardly foamed at the recollection of Granson and Murten, the memory of these disasters was too recent to permit such a plan of the campaign. Meantime, weeks glided past, and the month of December was far ad-

vanced, when, one morning, as the Duke was sitting in council, Campo-Basso suddenly entered, with a degree of extravagant rapture in his countenance, singularly different from the cold, regulated, and subtle smile which was usually his utmost advance towards laughter. "*Guantes*,"* he said, "*Guantes*, for luck's sake, if it please your Grace."

"And what of good fortune comes nigh us?" said the Duke,—"methought she had forgot the way to our gates."

"She has returned to them, please your Highness, with her cornucopia full of choicest gifts, ready to pour her fruit, her flowers, her treasures, on the head of the sovereign of Europe most worthy to receive them."

"The meaning of all these?" said Duke Charles; "riddles are for children."

"The hairbrained young madman Ferrand, who calls himself of Lorraine, has broken down

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* *Guantes*, used by the Spanish as the French say étrennes, or the English handsell or luckpenny—phrases used by inferiors to their patrons as the bringers of good news.

from the mountains, at the head of a desultory army of scape-graces like himself; and what think you,—ha! ha! ha they are overrunning Lorraine, and have taken Nancy—ha! ha! ha!"

"By my good faith, Sir Count," said Contay, astonished at the gay humour with which the Italian treated a matter so serious, "I have seldom heard a fool laugh more gaily at a more scurvy jest, than you, a wise man, laugh at the loss of the principal town of the province we are fighting for."

"I laugh," said Campo-Basso, "among the spears, as my warhorse does—ha! ha!—among the trumpets. I laugh also over the destruction of the enemy, and the dividing of the spoil, as eagles scream their joy over the division of their prey; I laugh"——

"You laugh," said the Lord of Contay, waxing impatient, "when you have all the mirth to yourself, as you laughed after our losses at Granson and Murten."

"Peace, sir!" said the Duke. "The Count of Campo-Basso has viewed the case as I do. This young knight-errant ventures from the pro-

tection of his mountains; and Heaven deal with me as I keep my oath, when I swear that the next fair field on which we meet shall see one of us dead! It is now the last week of the old year, and before Twelfth-Day we will see whether he or I shall find the bean in the cake.—To arms, my lords; let our camp instantly break up, and our troops move forward towards Lorraine. Send off the Italian and Albanian light cavalry, and the Stradiots, to scour the country in the van—Oxford, thou wilt bear arms in this journey, wilt thou not?"

"Surely," said the Earl. "I am eating your Highness's bread; and when enemies invade, it stands with my honour to fight for your Grace as if I was your born subject. With your Grace's permission, I will dispatch a pursuivant, who shall carry letters to my late kind host, the Landamman of Unterwalden, acquainting him with my purpose."

The Duke having given a ready assent, the pursuivant was dismissed accordingly, and returned in a few hours, so near had the armies approached to each other. He bore a letter

from the Landamman, in a tone of courtesy and even kindness, regretting that any cause should have occurred for bearing arms against his late guest, for whom he expressed high personal regard. The same pursuivant also brought greetings from the family of the Biedermans to their friend Arthur, and a separate letter, addressed to the same person, of which the contents ran thus:—

"Rudolf Donnerhugel is desirous to give the young merchant, Arthur Philipson, the opportunity of finishing the bargain which remained unsettled between them in the castle-court of Geierstein. He is the more desirous of this, as he is aware that the said Arthur has done him wrong, in seducing the affections of a certain maiden of rank, to whom he, Philipson, is not, and cannot be, any thing beyond an ordinary acquaintance. Rudolf Donnerhugel will send Arthur Philipson word, when a fair and equal meeting can take place on neutral ground. In the meantime, he will be as often as possible in the first rank of the skirmishers."

Young Arthur's heart leapt high as he read

the defiance, the piqued tone of which showed the state of the writer's feelings, and argued sufficiently Rudolf's disappointment on the subject of Anne of Geierstein, and his suspicion that she had bestowed her affections on the youthful stranger. Arthur found means of dispatching a reply to the challenge of the Swiss, assuring him of the pleasure with which he would attend his commands, either in front of the line or elsewhere, as Rudolf might desire.

Meantime the armies were closely approaching to each other, and the light troops sometimes met. The Stradiots from the Venetian territory, a sort of cavalry resembling that of the Turks, performed much of that service on the part of the Burgundian army, for which, indeed, if their fidelity could have been relied on, they were admirably well qualified. The Earl of Oxford observed, that these men, who were under the command of Campo-Basso, always brought in intelligence that the enemy were in indifferent order, and in full retreat. Besides, information was communicated through their

means, that sundry individuals, against whom the Duke of Burgundy entertained peculiar personal dislike, and whom he specially desired to get into his hands, had taken refuge in Nancy. This greatly increased the Duke's ardour for retaking that place, which became perfectly ungovernable when he learned that Ferrand and his Swiss allies had drawn off to a neighbouring position called Saint Nicholas, on the news of his arrival. The greater part of the Burgundian counsellors, together with the Earl of Oxford, protested against his besieging a place of some strength, while an active enemy lay in the neighbourhood to relieve it. They remonstrated on the smallness of his army, on the severity of the weather, on the difficulty of obtaining provisions, and exhorted the Duke, that having made such a movement as had forced the enemy to retreat, he ought to suspend decisive operations till spring. Charles at first tried to dispute and repel these arguments; but when his counsellors reminded him that he was placing himself and his army in the same situation as at Gran-

son and Murten, he became furious at the recollection, foamed at the mouth, and only answered by oaths and imprecations, that he would be master of Nancy before Twelfth Day.

Accordingly, the army of Burgundy sat down before Nancy, in a strong position, protected by the hollow of a water-course, and covered with thirty pieces of cannon, which Colvin had under his charge.

Having indulged his obstinate temper in thus arranging the campaign, the Duke seemed to give a little more heed to the advice of his counsellors touching the safety of his person, and permitted the Earl of Oxford, with his son, and two or three officers of his household, men of approved trust, to sleep within his pavilion, in addition to the usual guard.

It wanted three days of Christmas when the Duke sat down before Nancy, and on that very evening a tumult happened which seemed to justify the alarm for his personal safety. It was midnight, and all in the ducal pavilion were at rest, when a cry of treason arose. The Earl of Oxford, drawing his sword, and snatching up a

light which burned beside him, rushed into the Duke's apartment, and found him standing on the floor totally undressed, but with his sword in his hand, and striking around him so furiously, that the Earl himself had difficulty in avoiding his blows. The rest of his officers rushed in, their weapons drawn, and their cloaks wrapped around their left arms. When the Duke was somewhat composed, and found himself surrounded by his friends, he informed them, with rage and agitation, that the officers of the Secret Tribunal had, in spite of the vigilant precautions taken, found means to gain entrance into his chamber, and charged him, under the highest penalty, to appear before the Holy Vehmé upon Christmas night.

The bystanders heard this story with astonishment, and some of them were uncertain whether they ought to consider it as a reality, or a dream of the Duke's irritable fancy. But the citation was found on the Duke's toilette, written, as was the form, upon parchment, signeted with three crosses, and stuck to the table with a knife. A slip of wood had been also

cut from the table. Oxford read the summons with attention. It named as usual a place, where the Duke was cited to come unarmed and unattended, and from which it was said he would be guided to the seat of judgment.

Charles, after looking at the scroll for some time, gave vent to his thoughts.

"I know from what quiver this arrow comes," he said. "It is shot by that degenerate noble, apostate priest, and accomplice of sorcerers, Albert of Geierstein. We have heard that he is among the motley group of murderers and outlaws, whom the old fiddler of Provence's grandson has raked together. But, by Saint George of Burgundy! neither monk's cowl, soldier's casque, nor conjuror's cap, shall save him after such an insult as this. I will degrade him from knighthood, hang him from the highest steeple in Nancy, and his daughter shall choose between the meanest herd-boy in my army, and the convent of *filles repentées!*"

"Whatever are your purposes, my lord," said Contay, "it were surely best be silent, when,

from this late apparition, we may conjecture that more than we wot off may be within hearing."

The Duke seemed struck with this hint, and was silent, or at least only muttered oaths and threats betwixt his teeth, while the strictest search was made for the intruder on his repose. But it was in vain.

Charles continued his researches, incensed at a flight of audacity higher than ever had been ventured upon by these Secret Societies, who, whatever might be the dread inspired by them, had not as yet attempted to cope with sovereigns. A trusty party of Burgundians were sent on Christmas night to watch the spot (a meeting of four cross roads,) named in the summons, and make prisoners of any whom they could lay hands upon; but no suspicious persons appeared at or near the place. The Duke not the less continued to impute the affront he had received to Albert of Geierstein. There was a price set upon his head; and Campo-Basso, always willing to please his master's mood, undertook that some of his Italians, sufficiently experienced in such feats, should bring the obnoxious ba-

ron before him, alive or dead. Colvin, Contay, and others, laughed in secret at the Italian's promises.

"Subtle as he is," said Colvin, "he will lure the wild vulture from the heaven before he gets Albert of Geierstein into his power."

Arthur, to whom the words of the Duke had given subject for no small anxiety, on account of Anne of Geierstein, and of her father for her sake, breathed more lightly on hearing his menaces held so cheaply.

It was the second day after this alarm that Oxford felt a desire to reconnoitre the camp of Ferrand of Lorraine, having some doubts whether the strength and position of it were accurately reported. He obtained the Duke's consent for this purpose, who at the same time made him and his son a present of two noble steeds of great power and speed, which he himself highly valued.

So soon as the Duke's pleasure was communicated to the Italian Count, he expressed the utmost joy that he was to have the assistance of

Oxford's age and experience upon an exploratory party, and selected a chosen party of an hundred Stradiots, whom he said he had sent sometimes to skirmish up to the very beards of the Switzers. The Earl showed himself much satisfied with the active and intelligent manner in which these men performed their duty, and drove before them and dispersed some parties of Ferrand's cavalry. At the entrance of a little ascending valley, Campo-Basso communicated to the English nobleman, that if they could advance to the farther extremity, they would have a full view of the enemy's position. Two or three Stradiots then spurred on to examine this defile, and, returning back, communicated with their leader in their own language, who, pronouncing the passage safe, invited the Earl of Oxford to accompany him. They proceeded through the valley without seeing an enemy, but on issuing upon a plain at the point intimated by Campo-Basso, Arthur, who was in the van of the Stradiots, and separated from his father, did indeed see the camp of Duke Ferrand within half a mile's distance; but a body of cavalry

had that instant issued from it, and were riding hastily towards the gorge of the valley, from which he had just emerged. He was about to wheel his horse and ride off, but, conscious of, the great speed of the animal, he thought he might venture to stay for a moment's more accurate survey of the camp. The Stradiots who attended him did not wait his orders to retire, but went off, as was indeed their duty, when attacked by a superior force.

Meantime, Arthur observed that the Knight, who seemed leader of the advancing squadron, mounted on a powerful horse that shook the earth beneath him, bore on his shield the Bear of Berne, and had otherwise the appearance of the massive frame of Rudolf Donnerhugel. He was satisfied of this when he beheld the cavalier halt his party, and advance towards him alone, putting his lance in rest, and moving slowly, as if to give him time for preparation. To accept such a challenge, in such a moment, was dangerous, but to refuse it was disgraceful; and while Arthur's blood boiled at the idea of chastising an insolent rival, he was not a little pleased at

heart that their meeting on horseback gave him an advantage over the Swiss, through his perfect acquaintance with the practice of the tourney, in which Rudolf might be supposed more ignorant.

They met, as was the phrase of the time, "manful under shield." The lance of the Swiss glanced from the helmet of the Englishman, against which it was addressed, while the spear of Arthur, directed right against the centre of his adversary's body, was so justly aimed, and so truly seconded by the full fury of the career, as to pierce, not only the shield which hung round the ill-fated warrior's neck, but a breast-plate, and a shirt of mail which he wore beneath it. Passing clear through the body, the steel point of the weapon was only stopped by the back-piece of the unfortunate cavalier, who fell headlong from his horse, as if struck by lightning, rolled twice or thrice over on the ground, tore the earth with his hands, and then lay prostrate a dead corpse.

There was a cry of rage and grief among those men-at-arms whose ranks Rudolf had that in-

stant left, and many couched their lances to avenge him; but Ferrand of Lorraine, who was present in person, ordered them to make prisoner, but not to harm the successful champion. This was accomplished, for Arthur had not time to turn his bridle for flight, and resistance would have been madness.

When brought before Ferrand, he raised his visor, and said, "Is it well, my lord, to make captive an adventurous Knight, for doing his devoir against a personal challenger?"

"Do not complain, Sir Arthur of Oxford," said Ferrand, "before you experience injury—You are free, Sir Knight. Your father and you were faithful to my royal aunt Margaret, and although she was my enemy, I do justice to your fidelity in her behalf; and from respect to her memory, disinherited as she was like myself, and to please my grandfather, who I think had some regard for you, I give you your freedom. But I must also care for your safety during your return to the camp of Burgundy. On this side of the hill we are loyal and true-hearted men, on the other they are traitors and murderers.

—You, Sir Count, will, I think, gladly see our captive placed in safety."

The Knight to whom Ferrand addressed himself, a tall stately man, put himself in motion to attend on Arthur, while the former was expressing to the young Duke of Lorraine the sense he entertained of his chivalrous conduct. "Farewell, Sir Arthur de Vere," said Ferrand. "You have slain a noble champion, and to me a most useful and faithful friend. But it was done nobly and openly, with equal arms, and in the front of the line; and evil befall him who entertains feud first!" Arthur bowed to his saddle-bow. Ferrand returned the salutation, and they parted.

Arthur and his new companion had ridden but a little way up the ascent, when the stranger spoke thus:—

"We have been fellow-travellers before, young man, yet you remember me not."

Arthur turned his eyes on the cavalier, and observing that the crest which adorned his helmet was fashioned like a vulture, strange suspi-

cions began to cross his mind, which were confirmed, when the Knight, opening his helmet, showed him the dark and severe features of the Priest of Saint Paul's.

"Count Albert of Geierstein!" said Arthur.

"The same," replied the Count, "though thou hast seen him in other garb and head gear. But tyranny drives all men to arms, and I have resumed, by the license and command of my superiors, those which I had laid aside. A war against cruelty and oppression is holy as that waged in Palestine, in which priests bear armour."

"My Lord Count," said Arthur, eagerly, "I cannot too soon entreat you to withdraw to Sir Ferrand of Lorraine's squadron. Here you are in peril, where no strength or courage can avail you. The Duke has placed a price on your head; and the country betwixt this and Nancy swarms with Stradiots and Italian light horsemen."

"I laugh at them," answered the Count. "I have not lived so long in a stormy world, amid intrigues of war and policy, to fall by the mean

hand of such as they—besides thou art with me, and I have seen but now that thou canst bear thee nobly."

"In your defence, my lord," said Arthur, who thought of his companion as the father of Anne of Geierstein, "I should try to do my best."

"What, youth!" replied Count Albert, with a stern sneer, that was peculiar to his countenance; "wouldst thou aid the enemy of the lord under whose banner thou servest, against his waged soldiers?"

Arthur was somewhat abashed at the turn given to his ready offer of assistance, for which he had expected at least thanks; but he instantly collected himself, and replied, "My Lord Count Albert, you have been pleased to put yourself in peril to protect me from partizans of your party—I am equally bound to defend you from those of our side."

"It is happily answered," said the Count;—"yet I think there is a little blind partizan, of whom troubadours and minstrels talk, 'to

whose instigation I might, in case of need, owe the great zeal of my protector."

He did not allow Arthur, who was a good deal embarrassed, time to reply, but proceeded: "Hear me, young man—Thy lance has this day done an evil deed to Switzerland, to Berne, and Duke Ferrand, in slaying their bravest champion. But to me, the death of Rudolf Donnerhugel is a welcome event. Know that he was, as his services grew more indispensable, become importunate in requiring Duke Ferrand's interest with me for my daughter's hand. And the Duke himself, the son of a princess, blushed not to ask me to bestow the last of my house—for my brother's family are degenerate mongrels—upon a presumptuous young man, whose uncle was a domestic in the house of my wife's father, though they boasted some relationship, I believe, through an illegitimate channel, which yonder Rudolf was wont to make the most of, as it favoured his suit."

"Surely," said Arthur, "a match with one so unequal in birth, and far more in every other respect, was too monstrous to be mentioned."

"While I lived," replied Count Albert, "never should such union have been formed, if the death both of bride and bridegroom by my dagger could have saved the honour of my house from violation. But when I—I whose days, whose very hours are numbered—shall be no more, what could prevent an undaunted suitor, fortified by Duke Ferrand's favour, by the general applause of his country, and perhaps by the unfortunate prepossession of my brother Arnold, from carrying his point against the resistance and scruples of a solitary maiden?"

"Rudolf is dead," replied Arthur, "and may Heaven assoilzie him from guilt! But were he alive, and urging his suit on Anne of Geierstein, he would find there was a combat to be fought——"

"Which has been already decided," answered Count Albert. "Now, mark me, Arthur de Vere! My daughter has told me of the passages betwixt you and her. Your sentiments and conduct are worthy of the noble house you descend from, which I well know ranks

with the most illustrious in Europe. You are indeed disinherited, but so is Anne of Geierstein, save such pittance as her uncle may impart to her of her paternal inheritance. If you share it together till better days, (always supposing your noble father gives his consent, for my child shall enter no house against the will of its head,) my daughter knows that she has my willing consent, and my blessing. My brother shall also know my pleasure. He will approve my purpose; for though dead to thoughts of honour and chivalry, he is alive to social feelings, loves his niece, and has friendship for thee and for thy father. What say'st thou, young man, to taking a beggarly Countess, to aid thee in the journey of life? I believe—nay, I prophesy, (for I stand so much on the edge of the grave, that methinks I command a view beyond it,) that a lustre will one day, after I have long ended my doubtful and stormy life, beam on the coronets of De Vere and Geierstein."

De Vere threw himself from his horse, clasped the hand of Count Albert, and was about to

exhaust himself in thanks; but the Count insisted on his silence.

"We are about to part," he said. "The time is short—the place is dangerous. You are to me, personally speaking, less than nothing. Had any one of the many schemes of ambition which I have pursued led me to success, the son of a banished Earl had not been the son-in-law I had chosen. Rise and remount your horse—thanks are unpleasing when they are not merited."

Arthur arose, and, mounting his horse, threw his raptures into a more acceptable form, endeavouring to describe how his love for Anne, and efforts for her happiness, should express his gratitude to her father; and, observing that the Count listened with some pleasure to the picture he drew of their future life, he could not help exclaiming,—"And you, my lord—you who have been the author of all this happiness, will you not be the witness and partaker of it? Believe me, we will strive to soften the effect of the hard blows which fortune has dealt

to you, and should a ray of better luck shine upon us, it will be the more welcome that you can share it."

"Forbear such folly," said the Count Albert of Geierstein. "I know my last scene is approaching.—Hear and tremble. The Duke of Burgundy is sentenced to die, and the Secret and Invisible Judges, who doom in secret, and avenge in secret, like the Deity, have given the cord and the dagger to my hand."

"Oh, cast from you these vile symbols!" exclaimed Arthur, with enthusiasm; "let them find butchers and common stabbers to do such an office, and not dishonour the noble Lord of Geierstein."

"Peace, foolish boy," answered the Count. "The oath by which I am sworn is higher than that clouded sky, more deeply fixed than those distant mountains. Nor think my act is that of an assassin, though for such I might plead the Duke's own example. I send not hirelings, like these base Stradiots, to hunt his life, without imperilling mine own. I give not his daughter—

innocent of his offences—the choice betwixt a disgraceful marriage and a discreditable retreat from the world. No, Arthur de Vere, I seek Charles with the resolved mind of one, who, to take the life of an adversary, exposes himself to certain death."

"I pray you speak no farther of it," said Arthur, very anxiously. "Consider I serve for the present the Prince whom you threaten——"

"And art bound," interrupted the Count, "to unfold to him what I tell you. I desire you should do so; and though he hath already neglected a summons of the Tribunal, I am glad to have this opportunity of sending him personal defiance. Say to Charles of Burgundy, that he has wronged Albert of Geierstein. He who is injured in his honour loses all value for his life, and whoever does so has full command over that of another man. Bid him keep himself well from me, since, if he see a second sun of the approaching year rise over the distant Alps, Albert of Geierstein is forsworn.—And now begone, for I see a party approach under a Bur-

gundian banner. They will ensure your safety, but, should I remain longer, would endanger mine."

So saying, the Count of Geierstein turned his horse and rode off.

CHAPTER XIII.

Faint the din of battle bray'd
  Distant down the heavy wind;
War and Terror fled before,
  Wounds and Death were left behind.
MICKLE.

ARTHUR, left alone, and desirous perhaps to cover the retreat of Count Albert, rode towards the approaching body of Burgundian cavalry, who were arrayed under the Lord Contay's banner.

"Welcome, welcome," said that nobleman, advancing hastily to the young knight. "The Duke of Burgundy is a mile hence, with a body of horse to support the reconnoitring party. It is not half an hour since your father galloped up, and stated that you had been led into an

ambuscade by the treachery of the Stradiots, and made prisoner. He has impeached Campo-Basso of treason, and challenged him to the combat. They have both been sent to the camp, under charge of the Grand Marshal, to prevent their fighting on the spot, though I think our Italian showed little desire to come to blows. The Duke holds their gages, and they are to fight upon Twelfth Day."

"I doubt that day will never dawn for some who look for it," said Arthur; "but if it do, I will myself claim the combat, by my father's permission."

He then turned with Contay, and met a still larger body of cavalry under the Duke's broad banner. He was instantly brought before Charles. The Duke heard, with some apparent anxiety, Arthur's support of his father's accusations against the Italian, in whose favour he was so deeply prejudiced. When assured that the Stradiots had been across the hill, and communicated with their leader just before he encouraged Arthur to advance, as it proved, into

the midst of an ambush, the Duke shook his head, lowered his shaggy brows, and muttered to himself,—"Ill will to Oxford, perhaps—these Italians are vindictive."—Then raising his head, he commanded Arthur to proceed.

He heard with a species of ecstasy the death of Rudolf Donnerhugel, and, taking a ponderous gold chain from his own neck, flung it over Arthur's.

"Why, thou hast forestalled all our honours, young Arthur—this was the biggest bear of them all—the rest are but sucking whelps to him! I think I have found a youthful David to match their huge thick-headed Goliah. But the idiot, to think his peasant hand could manage a lance! Well, my brave boy—what more? How camest thou off? By some wily device or agile stratagem, I warrant."

"Pardon me, my lord," answered Arthur, "I was protected by their chief, Ferrand, who considered my encounter with Rudolf Donnerhugel as a personal duel; and desirous to use fair war, as he said, dismissed me honourably, with my horse and arms."

"Umph!" said Charles, his bad humour returning; "your Prince Adventurer must play the generous—Umph—well, it belongs to his part, but shall not be a line for me to square my conduct by. Proceed with your story, Sir Arthur de Vere."

As Arthur proceeded to tell how and under what circumstances Count Albert of Geierstein named himself to him, the Duke fixed on him an eager look, and trembled with impatience as he fiercely interrupted him with the question—"And you—you struck him with your poniard under the fifth rib, did you not?"

"I did not, my Lord Duke—we were pledged in mutual assurance to each other."

"Yet you knew him to be my mortal enemy?" said the Duke. "Go, young man, thy lukewarm indifference has cancelled thy merit. The escape of Albert of Geierstein hath counterbalanced the death of Rudolf Donnerhugel."

"Be it so, my lord," said Arthur, boldly. "I neither claim your praises, nor deprecate your censure. I had to move me in either case

motives personal to myself—Donnerhugel was my enemy, and to Count Albert I owe some kindness."

The Burgundian nobles who stood around, were terrified for the effect of this bold speech. But it was never possible to guess with accuracy how such things would affect Charles. He looked around him with a laugh—"Hear you this English cockerel, my lords—what a note will he one day sound, that already crows so bravely in a prince's presence?"

A few horsemen now came in from different quarters, recounting that the Duke Ferrand and his company had retired into their encampment, and the country was clear of the enemy.

"Let us then draw back also," said Charles, "since there is no chance of breaking spears to-day. And thou, Arthur de Vere, attend me closely."

Arrived in the Duke's pavilion, Arthur underwent an examination, in which he said nothing of Anne of Geierstein, or her father's designs concerning him, with which he considered Charles as having nothing to do; but he

frankly conveyed to him the personal threats which the Count had openly used. The Duke listened with more temper, and when he heard the expression, "That a man who is desperate of his own life might command that of any other person," he said, "But there is a life beyond this, in which he who is treacherously murdered, and his base and desperate assassin, shall each meet their deserts." He then took from his bosom a gold cross, and kissed it, with much appearance of devotion. "In this," said he, "I will place my trust. If I fail in this world, may I find grace in the next.—Ho, Sir Marshal!" he exclaimed—"Let your prisoners attend us."

The Marshal of Burgundy entered with the Earl of Oxford, and stated that his other prisoner, Campo-Basso, had desired so earnestly that he might be suffered to go and post his sentinels on that part of the camp entrusted to the protection of his troops, that he, the Marshal, had thought fit to comply with his request.

"It is well," said Burgundy, without further remark—"Then to you, my Lord Oxford, I would present your son, had you not already

locked him in your arms. He has won great *los* and honour, and done me brave service. This is a period of the year when good men forgive their enemies;—I know not why,—my mind was little apt to be charged with such matters,—but I feel an unconquerable desire to stop the approaching combat betwixt you and Campo-Basso. For my sake, consent to be friends, and to receive back your gage of battle, and let me conclude this year—perhaps the last I may see—with a deed of peace."

"My lord," said Oxford, "it is a small thing you ask of me, since your request only enforces a Christian duty. I was enraged at the loss of my son. I am grateful to Heaven and your Grace for restoring him. To be friends with Campo-Basso is to me impossible. Faith and treason, truth and falsehood, might as soon shake hands and embrace. But the Italian shall be to me no more than he has been before this rupture; and that is literally nothing. I put my honour in your Grace's hands;—if he receives back his gage, I am willing to receive mine. John de Vere needs not be apprehensive

that the world will suppose that he fears Campo-Basso."

The Duke returned sincere thanks, and detained the officers to spend the evening in his tent. His manners seemed to Arthur to be more placid than he had ever seen them before, while to the Earl of Oxford they recalled the earlier days in which their intimacy commenced, ere absolute power and unbounded success had spoiled Charles's rough, but not ungenerous disposition. The Duke ordered a distribution of provisions and wine to the soldiers, and expressed an anxiety about their lodgings, the cure of the wounded, and the health of the army, to which he received only unpleasing answers. To some of his counsellors, apart, he said, "Were it not for our vow, we would relinquish this purpose till spring, when our poor soldiers might take the field with less of suffering."

Nothing else remarkable appeared in the Duke's manner, save that he enquired repeatedly after Campo-Basso, and at length received accounts that he was indisposed, and that his physician had recommended rest; he had there-

fore retired to repose himself, in order that he might be stirring on his duty at peep of day, the safety of the camp depending much on his vigilance.

The Duke made no observation on the apology, which he considered as indicating some lurking disinclination, on the Italian's part, to meet Oxford. The guests at the ducal pavilion were dismissed an hour before midnight.

When Oxford and his son were in their own tent, the Earl fell into a deep reverie, which lasted nearly ten minutes. At length, starting suddenly up, he said, "My son, give orders to Thiebault and thy yeomen to have our horses before the tent by break of day, or rather before it; and it would not be amiss if you ask our neighbour Colvin to ride along with us. I will visit the outposts by daybreak."

"It is a sudden resolution, my lord," said Arthur.

"And yet it may be taken too late," said his father. "Had it been moonlight, I would have made the rounds to-night."

"It is dark as a wolf's throat," said Ar-

thur. "But wherefore, my lord, can this night in particular excite your apprehensions?"

"Son Arthur, perhaps you will hold your father credulous. But my nurse, Martha Nixon, was a northern woman, and full of superstitions. In particular, she was wont to say, that any sudden and causeless change of a man's nature, as from license to sobriety, from temperance to indulgence, from avarice to extravagance, from prodigality to love of money, or the like, indicates an immediate change of his fortunes—that some great alteration of circumstances, either for good or evil, (and for evil most likely, since we live in an evil world,) is impending over him whose disposition is so much altered. This old woman's fancy has recurred so strongly to my mind, that I am determined to see with mine own eyes, ere to-morrow's dawn, that all our guards and patroles around the camp are on the alert."

Arthur made the necessary communications to Colvin and to Thiebault, and then retired to rest.

It was ere daybreak of the first of January,

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SAR...

1477, a period long memorable for the events which marked it, that the Earl of Oxford, Colvin, and the young Englishman, followed only by Thiebault and two other servants, commenced their rounds of the Duke of Burgundy's encampment. For the greater part of their progress, they found sentinels and guards all on the alert and at their posts. It was a bitter morning. The ground was partly covered with snow,—that snow had been partly melted by a thaw, which had prevailed for two days, and partly congealed into ice by a bitter frost, which had commenced the preceding evening, and still continued. A more dreary scene could scarcely be witnessed.

But what were the surprise and alarm of the Earl of Oxford and his companions, when they came to that part of the camp which had been occupied the day before by Campo-Basso and his Italians, who, reckoning men-at-arms and Stradiots, amounted to nigh two thousand men. Not a challenge was given—not a horse neighed—no steeds were seen at picquet—no guard on the camp. They examined several of the tents and huts—they were empty.

"Let us back to alarm the camp," said the Earl of Oxford; "here is treachery."

"Nay, my lord," said Colvin, "let us not carry back imperfect tidings. I have a battery an hundred yards in advance, covering the access to this hollow way; let us see if my German cannoneers are at their post, and I think I can swear that we shall find them so. The battery commands a narrow pass, by which alone the camp can be approached, and if my men are at their duty, I will pawn my life that we make the pass good till you bring up succours from the main body."

"Forward, then, in God's name!" said the Earl of Oxford.

They galloped, at every risk, over broken ground, slippery with ice in some places, encumbered with snow in others. They came to the cannon, judiciously placed to sweep the pass, which rose towards the artillery on the outward side, and then descended gently from the battery into the lower ground. The waning winter moon, mingling with the dawning light, showed them that the guns were in their places, but no sentinel was visible.

"The villains cannot have deserted!" said the astonished Colvin—"But see, there is light in their cantonment.—Oh, that unhallowed distribution of wine! Their usual sin of drunkenness has beset them. I will soon drive them from their revelry."

He sprung from his horse, and rushed into the tent from whence the light issued. The cannoneers, or most of them, were still there, but stretched on the ground, their cups and flagons scattered around them; and so drenched were they in wassail, that Colvin could only, by commands and threats, awaken two or three, who, staggering, and obeying him rather from instinct than sense, reeled forward to man the battery. A heavy rushing sound, like that of men marching fast, was now heard coming up the pass.

"It is the roar of a distant avalanche," said Arthur.

"It is an avalanche of Switzers, not of snow," said Colvin.—"Oh, these drunken slaves!—The cannon are deeply loaded and well pointed—this volley must check them if they were

fiends, and the report will alarm the camp sooner than we can do.—But, oh, these drunken villains !"

"Care not for their aid," said the Earl; "my son and I will each take a linstock, and be gunners for once."

They dismounted, and bade Thiebault and the grooms look to the horses, while the Earl of Oxford and his son took each a linstock from one of the helpless gunners, three of whom were just sober enough to stand by their guns.

"Bravo !" cried the bold Master of Ordnance, "never was a battery so noble. Now, my mates—your pardon, my lords, for there is no time for ceremony,—and you, ye drunken knaves, take heed not to fire till I give the word, and, were the ribs of these tramplers as flinty as their Alps, they shall know how old Colvin loads his guns."

They stood breathless, each by his cannon. The dreaded sound approached nearer and more near, till the imperfect light showed a dark and shadowy but dense column of men, armed with

long spears, pole-axes, and other weapons, amidst which banners dimly floated. Colvin suffered them to approach to the distance of about forty yards, and then gave the word, Fire! But his own piece alone exploded; a slight flame flashed from the touch-hole of the others, which had been spiked by the Italian deserters, and left in reality disabled, though apparently fit for service. Had they been all in the same condition with that fired by Colvin, they would probably have verified his prophecy; for even that single discharge produced an awful effect, and made a long lane of dead and wounded through the Swiss column, in which the first and leading banner was struck down.

"Stand to it yet," said Colvin, "and aid me, if possible, to reload the piece."

For this, however, no time was allowed. A stately form, conspicuous in the front of the staggered column, raised up the fallen banner, and a voice as of a giant exclaimed, "What, countrymen! have you seen Murten and Granson, and are you daunted by a single gun?—Berne—Uri—Schwitz—banners forward! Un-

terwalden, here is your standard!—Cry your war-cries, wind your horns; Unterwalden, follow your Landamman!"

They rushed on like a raging ocean, with a roar as deafening, and a course as impetuous. Colvin, still labouring to reload his gun, was struck down in the act. Oxford and his son were overthrown by the multitude, the closeness of which prevented any blows being aimed at them. Arthur partly saved himself by getting under the gun he was posted at; his father, less fortunate, was much trampled upon, and must have been crushed to death but for his armour of proof. The human inundation, consisting of at least four thousand men, rushed down into the camp, continuing their dreadful shouts, soon mingled with shrill shrieks, groans, and cries of alarm.

A broad red glare rising behind the assailants, and putting to shame the pallid lights of the winter morning, first recalled Arthur to a sense of his condition. The camp was on fire in his rear, and resounded with all the various shouts of conquest and terror that are heard in a town

which is stormed. Starting to his feet, he looked around him for his father. He lay near him senseless, as were the gunners, whose condition prevented their attempting an escape. Having opened his father's casque, he was rejoiced to see him give symptoms of reanimation.

"The horses, the horses!" said Arthur. "Thiebault, where art thou?"

"At hand, my lord," said that trusty attendant, who had saved himself and his charge by a prudent retreat into a small thicket, which the assailants had avoided that they might not disorder their ranks.

"Where is the gallant Colvin?" said the Earl; "get him a horse, I will not leave him in jeopardy."

"His wars are ended, my lord," said Thiebault; "he will never mount steed more."

A look and a sigh as he saw Colvin, with the ramrod in his hand, before the muzzle of the piece, his head cleft by a Swiss battle-axe, was all the moment permitted.

"Whither must we take our course?" said Arthur to his father.

"To join the Duke," said the Earl of Oxford. "It is not on a day like this that I will leave him."

"So please you," said Thiebault, "I saw the Duke, followed by some half score of his guards, riding at full speed across this hollow water-course, and making for the open country to the northward. I think I can guide you on the track."

"If that be so," replied Oxford, "we will mount and follow him. The camp has been assailed on several places at once, and all must be over since he has fled."

With difficulty they assisted the Earl of Oxford to his horse, and rode as fast as his returning strength permitted, in the direction which the Provençal pointed out. Their other attendants were dispersed or slain.

They looked back more than once on the camp, now one great scene of conflagration, by whose red and glaring light they could discover on the ground the traces of Charles's retreat. About three miles from the scene of their defeat, the sound of which they still heard, mingled

with the bells of Nancy, which were ringing in triumph, they reached an half-frozen swamp, round which lay several dead bodies. The most conspicuous was that of Charles of Burgundy, once the possessor of such unlimited power—such unbounded wealth. He was partly stripped and plundered, as were those who lay round him. His body was pierced with several wounds, inflicted by various weapons. His sword was still in his hand, and the singular ferocity which was wont to animate his features in battle, still dwelt on his stiffened countenance. Close behind him, as if they had fallen in the act of mutual fight, lay the corpse of Count Albert of Geierstein; and that of Ital Schreckenwald, the faithful though unscrupulous follower of the latter, lay not far distant. Both were in the dress of the men-at-arms composing the Duke's guard, a disguise probably assumed to execute the fatal commission of the Secret Tribunal. It is supposed that a party of the traitor Campo-Basso's men had been engaged in the skirmish in which the Duke fell, for six or seven of them, and about the same number of the Duke's guards, were found near the spot.

The Earl of Oxford threw himself from his horse, and examined the body of his deceased brother-in-arms, with all the sorrow inspired by early remembrance of his kindness. But as he gave way to the feelings inspired by so melancholy an example of the fall of human greatness, Thiebault, who was looking out on the path they had just pursued, exclaimed, "To horse, my lord! here is no time to mourn the dead, and little to save the living—the Swiss are upon us."

"Fly thyself, good fellow," said the Earl; "and do thou, Arthur, fly also, and save thy youth for happier days. I cannot and will not fly farther. I will render me to the pursuers; if they take me to grace, it is well; if not, there is ONE above that will receive me to his."

"I will not fly," said Arthur, "and leave you defenceless; I will stay and share your fate."

"And I will remain also," said Thiebault; "the Switzers make fair war when their blood has not been heated by much opposition, and they have had little enough to day."

The party of Swiss which came up proved to be Sigismund, with his brother Ernest, and some of the youths of Unterwalden. Sigismund kindly and joyfully received them to mercy; and thus, for the third time, rendered Arthur an important service, in return for the kindness he had expressed towards him.

"I will take you to my father," said Sigismund, "who will be right glad to see you; only that he is ill at ease just now for the death of brother Rudiger, who fell with the banner in his hand, by the only cannon that was fired this morning; the rest could not bark; Campo-Basso had muzzled Colvin's mastiffs, or we should many more of us have been served like poor Rudiger. But Colvin himself is killed."

"Campo-Basso then was in your correspondence?" said Arthur.

"Not in ours—we scorn such companions—but some dealing there was between the Italian and Duke Ferrand; and having disabled the cannon, and filled the German gunners soundly drunk, he came off to our camp with fifteen hundred horse, and offered to act with us. 'But

no, no!' said my father,—'traitors come not into our Swiss host;' and so, though we walked in at the door which he left open, we would not have his company. So he marched with Duke Ferrand to attack the other extremity of the camp, where he found them entrance by announcing them as the return of a reconnoitring party."

"Nay, then," said Arthur, "a more accomplished traitor never drew breath, nor one who drew his net with such success."

"You say well," answered the young Swiss. "The Duke will never, they say, be able to collect another army?"

"Never, young man," said the Earl of Oxford, "for he lies dead before you."

Sigismund started; for he had an inherent respect, and somewhat of fear, for the lofty name of Charles the Bold, and could hardly believe that the mangled corpse, which now lay before him, was once the personage he had been taught to dread. But his surprise was mingled with sorrow, when he saw the body of his uncle, Count Albert of Geierstein.

"Oh, my uncle!" he said—"my dear uncle Albert, has all your greatness and your wisdom brought you to a death, at the side of a ditch, like any crazed beggar?—Come, this sad news must be presently told to my father, who will be concerned to hear of his brother's death, which will add gall to bitterness, coming on the back of poor Rudiger's. It is some comfort, however, that father and uncle never could abide each other."

With some difficulty, they once more assisted the Earl of Oxford to horseback, and were proceeding to set forward, when the English lord said,—"You will place a guard here, to save these bodies from farther dishonour, that they may be interred with due solemnity."

"By our Lady of Einsiedlen! I thank you for the hint," said Sigismund. "Yes, we should do all that the church can for uncle Albert. It is to be hoped he has not gambled away his soul beforehand, playing with Satan at odds and evens. I would we had a priest to stay by his poor body; but it matters not, since no one ever heard of a demon appearing just before breakfast."

They proceeded to the Landamman's quarters, through sights and scenes which Arthur, and even his father, so well accustomed to war in all its shapes, could not look upon without shuddering. But the simple Sigismund, as he walked by Arthur's side, contrived to hit upon a theme so interesting as to divert his sense of the horrors around them.

"Have you farther business in Burgundy, now this Duke of yours is at an end?"

"My father knows best," said Arthur; "but I apprehend we have none. The Duchess of Burgundy, who must now succeed to some sort of authority in her late husband's dominion, is sister to this Edward of York, and a mortal enemy to the House of Lancaster, and to those who have stood by it faithfully. It were neither prudent nor safe to tarry where she has influence."

"In that case," said Sigismund, "my plan will fadge bravely. You shall go back to Geierstein, and take up your dwelling with us. Your father will be a brother to mine, and a better one than uncle Albert, whom he seldom

saw or spoke with; while with your father he will converse from morning till night, and leave us all the work of the farm. And you, Arthur, you shall go with us, and be a brother to us all, in place of poor Rudiger, who was, to be sure, my real brother, which you cannot be: nevertheless, I did not like him so well, in respect he was not so good-natured. And then Anne—cousin Anne—is left all to my father's charge, and is now at Geierstein—and you know, King Arthur, we used to call her Queen Guenover."

"You spoke great folly then," said Arthur.

"But it is great truth—For, look you, I loved to tell Anne tales of our hunting, and so forth, but she would not listen a word till I threw in something of King Arthur, and then I warrant she would sit still as a heath-hen when the hawk is in the heavens. And now Donnerhugel is slain, you know you may marry my cousin when you and she will, for nobody hath interest to prevent it."

Arthur blushed with pleasure under his helmet, and almost forgave that new-year's morning all its complicated distresses.

"You forget," he replied to Sigismund, with as much indifference as he could assume, "that I may be viewed in your country with prejudice on account of Rudolf's death."

"Not a whit, not a whit; we bear no malice for what is done in fair fight under shield. It is no more than if you had beat him in wrestling or at quoits—only it is a game cannot be played over again."

They now entered the town of Nancy; the windows were hung with tapestry, and the streets crowded with tumultuous and rejoicing multitudes, whom the success of the battle had relieved from great alarm for the formidable vengeance of Charles of Burgundy.

The prisoners were received with the utmost kindness by the Landamman, who assured them of his protection and friendship. He appeared to support the death of his son Rudiger with stern resignation.

"He had rather," he said, "his son fell in battle, than that he should live to despise the old simplicity of his country, and think the object of combat was the gaining of spoil. The

gold of the dead Burgundy," he added, "would injure the morals of Switzerland more irretrievably than ever his sword did their bodies."

He heard of his brother's death without surprise, but apparently with emotion.

"It was the conclusion," he said, "of a long tissue of ambitious enterprises, which often offered fair prospects, but uniformly ended in disappointment."

The Landamman farther intimated, that his brother had apprized him that he was engaged in an affair of so much danger, that he was almost certain to perish in it, and had bequeathed his daughter to her uncle's care, with instructions respecting her.

Here they parted for the present, but shortly after, the Landamman enquired earnestly of the Earl of Oxford, what his motions were like to be, and whether he could assist them.

"I think of choosing Bretagne for my place of refuge," answered the Earl, "where my wife has dwelt since the battle of Tewkesbury expelled us from England."

"Do not so," said the kind Landamman, "but

come to Geierstein with the Countess, where, if she can, like you, endure our mountain manners and mountain fare, you are welcome as to the house of a brother, to a soil where neither conspiracy nor treason ever flourished. Bethink you, the Duke of Bretagne is a weak prince, entirely governed by a wicked favourite, Peter Landais. He is as capable—I mean the minister—of selling brave men's blood, as a butcher of selling bullock's flesh; and you know, there are those, both in France and Burgundy, that thirst after yours."

The Earl of Oxford expressed his thanks for the proposal, and his determination to profit by it, if approved of by Henry of Lancaster, Earl of Richmond, whom he now regarded as his sovereign.

To close the tale, about three months after the battle of Nancy, the banished Earl of Oxford resumed his name of Philipson, bringing with his lady some remnants of their former wealth, which enabled them to procure a commodious residence near to Geierstein; and the Landamman's interest in the state procured for them

the right of denizenship. The high blood, and the moderate fortunes, of Anne of Geierstein and Arthur de Vere, joined to their mutual inclination, made their marriage in every respect rational; and Annette, with her bachelor, took up their residence with the young people, not as servants, but mechanical aids in the duties of the farm; for Arthur continued to prefer the chase to the labours of husbandry, which was of little consequence, as his separate income amounted, in that poor country, to opulence. Time glided on, till it amounted to five years since the exiled family had been inhabitants of Switzerland. In the year 1482, the Landamman Biederman died the death of the righteous, lamented universally, as a model of the true and valiant, simple-minded and sagacious chiefs, who ruled the ancient Switzers in peace, and headed them in battle. In the same year, the Earl of Oxford lost his noble Countess.

But the star of Lancaster, at that period, began again to culminate, and called the banished lord and his son from their retirement, to mix once more in politics. The treasured

necklace of Margaret was then put to its destined use, and the produce applied to levy those bands which shortly after fought the celebrated battle of Bosworth, in which the arms of Oxford and his son contributed so much to the success of Henry VII. This changed the destinies of De Vere and his lady. Their Swiss farm was conferred on Annette and her husband; and the manners and beauty of Anne of Geierstein attracted as much admiration at the English Court as formerly in the Swiss Chalét.

THE END.

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